SPIRITUAL PATH

BY

L. R. PURI

Light of the world series, No. 5.

THE SPIRITUAL PATH.

or

Sant Mat

A treatise on transcendent experience, mysticism and transport.

BY

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PANJAB EDUCATIONAL SERVICE.

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VOLUME I.

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DEDICATED

WITH

MOST PROFOUND HUMILITY,

REVERENCE,

AND

LOVE

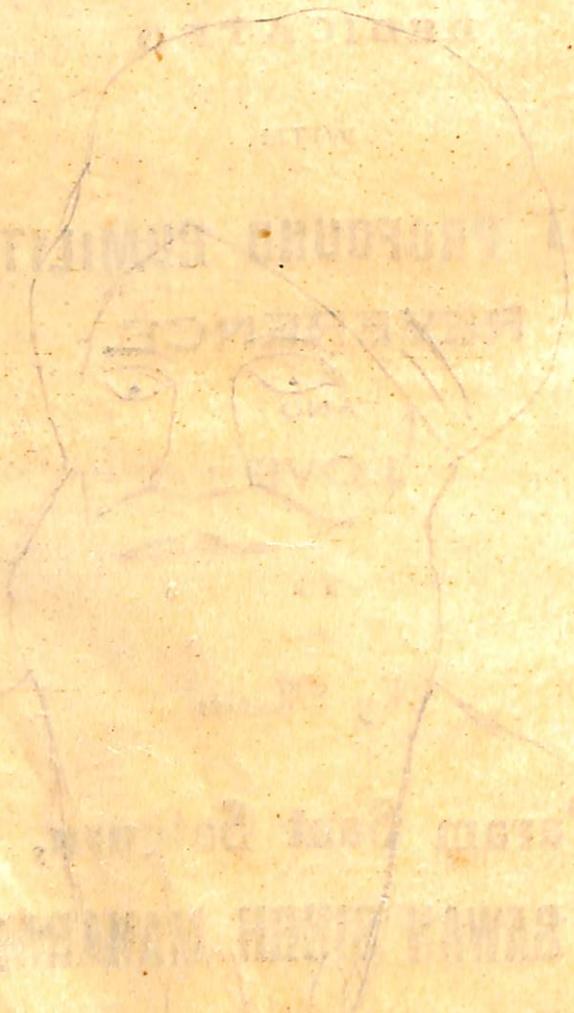
TO

My Master

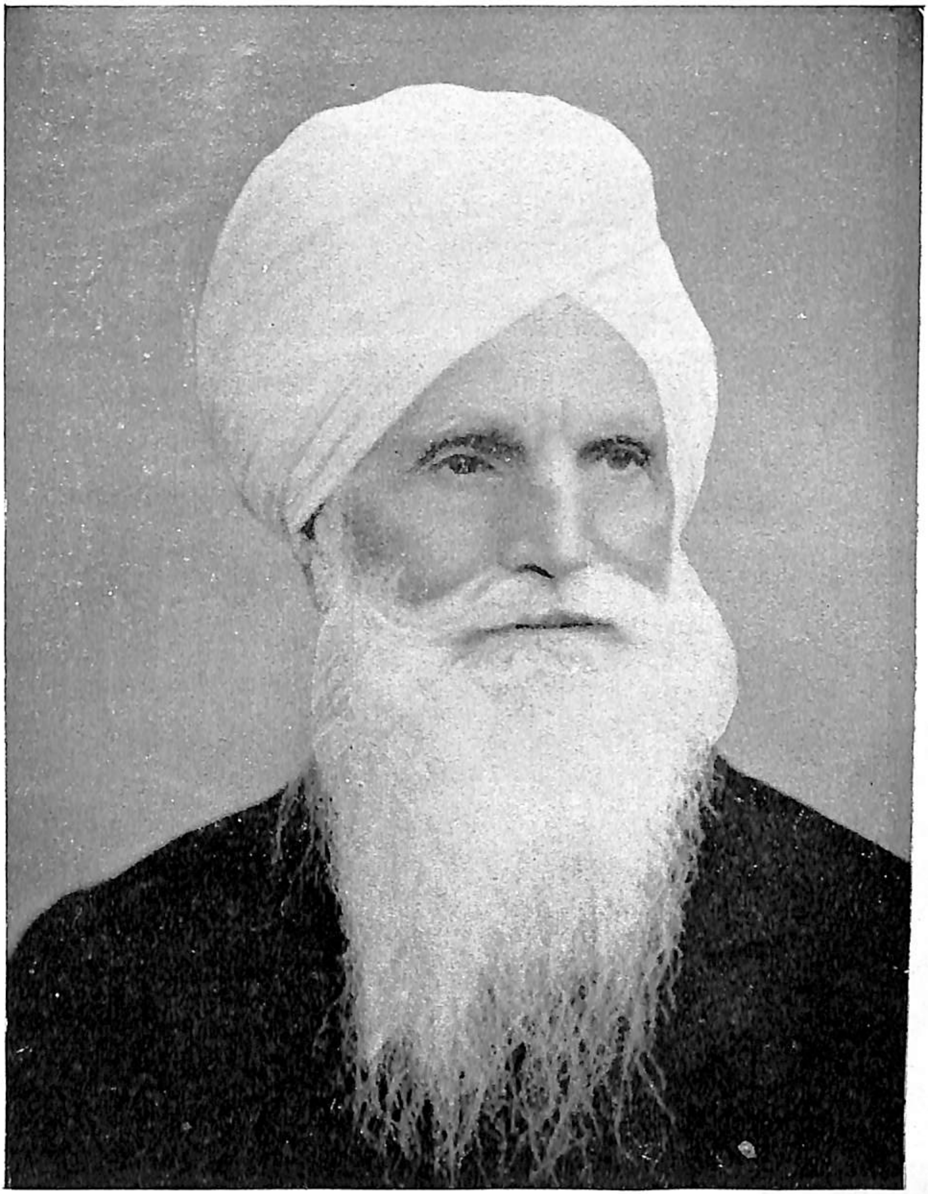
Param Sant Satguru,

BABA SAWAN SINGH MAHARAJ JI

LEKH RAJ PURI.



THE GREAT MASTER



HUZOOR MAHARAJ BABA SAWAN SINGH JI

Important Note

The word "Spirituality" has been used throughout the book as a substitute for "mysticism", but it does not fit in at some places; there it means -"mysticism".

--L. R. Puri

FOREWORD.

It has been my very great pleasure to know the author of this book for the last six years, on terms of intimate friendship and brotherhood. In fact, we are both disciples of the same great Master. He is not only one of India's best scholars, but he is the son of a famous Sanskrit and Panjabi scholar who has edited the book. They are both well informed in the Science of Sant Mat, and they are eminently qualified to write on the subject of the *Spiritual Path.*

The Author has put in a lot of time during the last four or five years in studying and writing these two volumes as well as his lectures given daily in the college with which he is connected, in the department of philosophy. The student of the Spiritual Path, or the "Path of the Masters," can not fail to realize great benefit from the reading of this book. The author has most carefully and painstakingly studied all available

literature in the vernacular and classical tongues of this country, and has diligently revised them in the light of the lectures of the great Master to which he himself has listened. This book then is the fruit of years of hard work and deep thought. I wish to commend it, with all my heart, to my American confreres especially, and to the English speaking world at large. He presents this great theme from the view point of an educated Indian, and his estimate of the Master and the Master's teaching, is extremely valuable. As a highly educated Indian, whose life-long study and close acquaintance with Indian systems, also Indian yogis, and other teachers, has surely enabled him to sift out the wheat from the chaff and to give to the western world the cream of the mystic and the spiritual as he has found them. He has so clearly written down what appears to him of supreme value in them all, that it surely becomes the western student to at least read and carefully consider what he says.

Students now are beginning to come to

the Great Master from all over the world; not only from the Panjab and India, but from far away America and from Switzerland, from Egypt and Malay, from East Africa, from Palestine and the delta of the Nile. Every mail now brings to the Great Master applicants for the Initiation from all of these regions. Rapidly this spiritual center on the banks of the Beas River is becoming the capital of the world, in all matters spiritual. Simulataneously with the general enquiry. literature is now being prepared in English having as its chief object to set before the intellectual world the essential principles of the supreme science of all sciences, that of the Masters. The author of this book has done a noble service in helping to give to the world a clearer understanding of this the most important of all themes known to religion or philosophy.

JULIAN P. JOHNSON.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

It is with very great pleasure and pride that I have seen this unique work through the press. As Editor, I have taken the liberty of making some alterations and additions without the permission of the learned author, who, I daresay, as a worthy son of the Editor, will not mind the latter's interference.

B. D. PURI.

THE SPIRITUAL PATH.

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PREFACE.

Spirituality has never been popular with the world at large. As it does not touch their sphere of interest, most men find it cold and dry. They concern themselves wholly with this visible, palpable phenomena; subtle, etherial entities have no attraction for them. They are too much taken up with this world to think of the next; too much engrossed in material progress to look after their spiritual welfare. How many desire to have a peep into the hidden mystery of things and the underlying reality of the universe? How many seek a spiritual insight into the 'Infinite Before' and the 'Eternal Beyond'? How many are athirst for the true knowledge of God, Soul, and other transcendent entities? Very few indeed!

Now, even out of these few, several, although interested in questions about Absolute Reality, are still averse to spirituality. Their aversion is perhaps due to

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Now, even out of these few, several, although interested in questions about Absolute Reality, are still averse to spirituality. Their aversion is perhaps due to

wrong and vague ideas about this subject and some sort of bias against occult science in general. This book, it is hoped, will help to remove such a bias and vagueness from the mind of its readers; for the object here has been to present in a clear and concise manner the outstanding features of Spirituality, so that it may easily be distinguished from Philosophical theories on the one hand and Religious doctrines on the other, and ultimately be judged for what it is. All that is given here has been substantiated by original vernacular and classical quotations from the writings of some well-known sages and saints, with their English translation. An effort has been made to stick, wherever possible, to the wording of the quotation ; but where a free rendering is given, the sense of the original has been scrupulously preserved.

The subject of Spirituality is very vast, subtle, and intricate ; and full justice could not be done to it in such a small space. Some points have merely been

touched or treated very briefly, not because they are unimportant in themselves; but for fear lest a detailed discussion of them should carry us beyond the scope of the present treatise.

In the subject matter, as also the manner in which it is presented, this book is perhaps the first of its kind in the English language, and should prove useful to all who seek a true knowledge of Reality, without any distinction of caste, creed, or colour. It contains an account of the methods employed by saints for exploring the unknown transcendent regions beyond death, and getting salvation, ***now and here***. Thus it should provide food for reflection to all true seekers.

Shabda-yoga, to which the whole of the last part of Volume II will be devoted, claims to show us the way to true and transcendent knowledge, highest and lasting bliss, and deepest and purest love ; to lead us out of the 'Karmic ' chain of Cause and Effect into the realm of naked and re-

fulgent Spirituality; and ultimately to land us in the warm lap of our true Heavenly Father, who is the fountain-head of all and Being and Existence. All this can be achieved in this very life, and before the soul finally leaves this mortal frame. Such a subject concerns the whole of mankind, and time spent in its study would not be thrown away.

This book is based on the notes taken from the 'satsangs' of my Master at Beas, to whom I have no words to express my profound gratitude. Originally a paper for the Brett Philosophical Society, Government College, Lahore, this book is, in point of language, suited at many places to oral delivery. Moreover, perhaps partially due to the very nature of the subject, it is also open to the charge of repetition. For these and all other shortcomings the writer craves the indulgence of his kind readers and trusts that they will peruse these few pages with an unbiased mind, and with a view

to getting at the purport of what he says.

Any suggestions would be gratefully received.

L. R. Puri.

THE

SPIRITUAL PATH

VOLUME I.

NEED OF SPIRITUALITY

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inspiring Book

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THE SPIRITUAL PATH

CHAPTER I.

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS OF LIFE

OR

Metaphysical Considerations

WHEN we cast a glance around us, we find ourselves in a heterogeneous world with a keen struggle for life raging on all sides. Every man tries to stay on here as long as he can, and make his stay as pleasurable as possible. With most of us this has become the very aim of our earthly existence. Our thought is solely rivetted to this present life; it seldom goes beyond to know what lies on either side. Instead of probing deep to the ultimate reality, we remain satisfied with

Phenomena or Appearance. But if we would not be driven blindly, we must pause to reflect on ourselves and try to find out what we are and whither we are going. There are several pressing problems which meet us on the very threshold of consciousness and demand a solution. For instance we may ask ourselves:

Various Problems

What are we? What is all this that we see about us? What is the object of this creation? What is our function in it? Did we exist before our birth? If we did, what was our condition then? Shall we continue "to be" after death? If "yes", then what state shall we find ourselves in? What is the reality or essence of our being? What is this human life? Have we been sent here? If so, who has sent us and why? What is all this phenomena of the universe? Why is it like this and not otherwise? What is its deep reality or significance? Has it been created?

If so, by whom ? Who is that Creator ? What is His nature and being ? What is Time ? What is Space ? Is this whole fabric of the universe finally going to dissolve ? If it is, why and when ? What will happen after that dissolution ? What is death ? What is beyond death ? Is death really painful ? If so, how can we avert that pain and solve that mystery ? Questions like these stare us in the face : we cannot pass them over. They must be answered if we want to lead a real waking life, if we desire our own true well-being and the well-being of others.

1. Problem of Being.

(*a*) *Reality of Man.* What are we ? The obvious answer is that we are men. But is man-ness the essence of our being ? Shall we cease to be when we "shuffle off this mortal coil" ? This we do not know. We are not 'body' to be sure, for according to physiologists the human body undergoes an entire change in seven or twelve years'

time. Our habits change, our thoughts, our mental faculties, all change ; everything about us changes in course of time. What is it then that subsists and persists ? that does not change ? that constitutes an entity ? What is it that keeps us the same person in spite of all apparent change ? that makes us the same individual when every thing known to us changes ? What is it that notices the change as a change in the same thing ? that gives us the certainty that "I" am the same person ? What is this "I" that sees, thinks, and questions ? What is the ultimate reality and essence of our being ? What is consciousness ? What is "Soul" ? About that we are absolutely in the dark. Our vision is limited to the short span of time between our birth and death. Of the vast infinity before and beyond, we are utterly ignorant.

"What you are, you do not see ;
What you see is your shadow."

Our reality is hidden from us.

خویشتن نشناخت مسکین آدمی ❖ از فزونی آمد و شد در کمی

(Poor man knoweth not himself ; for gain, doth he come; but alas! goeth he with loss).

(*b*) *Reality of the world.* Then what is this world ? Is it what it appears to be, or has it a Reality behind Appearance ? It is changing every moment ; everything here is undergoing a perpetual, unceasing change. Is there any thing in it that does not change ? What is the Reality behind Phenomena ? Do we know this ? We see and experience only "Phenomena" or "Appearance" ; Reality is a sealed book to us.

تو مرغ تیز پری، هم به آسمان بپر ❖ تو تن زدی و نگفتی که این فغان ز کجا

(Thou art a fast bird, fly thou up towards the heavens ; but in the body art thou, and questionest not : where from is this din ?)

What is this noisy world ? Is it all a

meaningless jumble— "a big, blooming, buzzing confusion" or has it a significance? What is its true Reality?

(*c*) ***Object of human life.*** And what is this human life? What is its ultimate object? Man comes into the world, plays his part, and goes away. "This world is a stage, and we all its actors are"; and "one man in his time plays many parts"; but all of us have our "entrances", and our "exits". We strive to keep the soul and body together, and carry on this struggle until the two are sundered by the cruel hand of Death. Many a blooming flower is nipped in the bud, many a deserving man is neglected and thrown into the back-ground.

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air".

The enthusiastic hopes of many a

rising youth are crushed to pieces before they see the light of realization. What is the meaning of this mysterious play? Do we come here merely to pass our time, and be gone?

"What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?
Most men eddy about
Here and there —eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die".

Is our business merely to eat, drink, beget children, earn our living, ... and finally die? Is there no better end to human life?

(*d*) *Reality of Time and Space.* Further what is Time? What is Space? Are they infinite? Is there no beginning and no end to them? Can we imagine infinite Time and infinite Space? Can we imagine them to be limited? Are they a delusion?

Are they real or only "categories of the mind"? Do they have objective reality, or are they merely subjective phenomena? If Time and Space are real, then as we can think only of a small section of their infinite expanse, it seems the world beyond must remain a mystery for ever; if they are unreal, that would change our notions of things as well, for all things of this world are in Time and Space. In that case, things themselves would cease to be. Then what is the Absolute Reality?

(*e*) *The Supreme Being*. And what is God? Is there any God at all? What is the source of the enormous power at work in the world? Can matter have power or energy without having consciousness, or "at least connection with a conscious Being"? What is power? In our personal experience we find it allied with consciousness? We know, feel, will and *do*. How can we explain "Power" in nature? What is electricity, or Magnetism, or Gravitation, for instance? Can an inert piece of dead

matter attract other things to it ? Is this round ball of our earth living ? How does the Sun manage to keep so many planets revolving round it ? The real question is —What *is* Power ? Do we know of Power separate from conscious willing ? If not, then what is the source of this practically infinite store of power in nature ? Shall we assign this power to God ? Then what is God, and what connection has He with us ?

2. Problem of Morality

(*a*) *What is "Good"* ? Next let us consider the question of moral good and evil. People say we should do good to others, and certainly we ought to do good, not only to others but also to ourselves. The Utilitarian cry is,—the greatest good of the greatest number. Every religion teaches us to be benevolent, to do others good. But what is "Good" ? This is to be settled first of all. Unless we know what "good" is, it is absurd to talk of "doing good", and

"realising good". What is "Good"? That is the fundamental question, without solving which we cannot say what line of action we should adopt, and what sort of deeds we should perform. Unless we know our destination, we cannot make a start in the right direction; unless we discover what we have to aim at in this worldly struggle, we are not well equipped for the battle of life.

Generally we look upon helping others with food, clothes, and shelter, as doing good. We give a penny to a blind man or a loaf of bread to a hungry one, and feel satisfied that we have done some "Good". Perhaps it is really good to help the needy,—to clothe the naked and feed the hungry;—but are we sure that by doing so, we are doing good and not harm to the man? *Can* we be sure when we do not know what the *ultimate* effect of such an action may be? It may result in the spiritual degradation of the poor creature; for we know not whether privation and suffering are

better for his spiritual uplift, or plenty. With our frail intellect, we cannot guage what the effect of our action shall be on his *soul*, and how he would fare for it *in the long run*. Man's physical wants are not the most urgent, nor the most primary. He has spiritual needs which are most pressing, for it is believed that "soul" is a more integral part of man than his "body." Then what is "good" for the soul ?

Education is the cry of the day, and education indeed satisfies man's intellectual craving. Opening schools and colleges and sowing the seed of such knowledge broadcast, is perhaps really very good ; but intellectual learning is not the be-all and end-all of human life. Intellect is merely an instrument for the use of the soul, the body is a grosser one. We must meet the needs of these instruments proportionately to their worth ; but what is the need of the naked soul ? What is that highest kind of "Good", which is not physical or intellectual but purely spiritual, which survives the

death of the body and the intellect, and transcends the bounds of the physical and the mental worlds?

The effects of our ordinary charitable and benevolent actions pass away very soon; they bring but a temporary and superficial relief. All our physical and intellectual wants end with our life; they are concerned with this world. What is that "good" which may live with us after our death; which may be useful to us for all time? What is that good which may colour the very essence of our existence, which may enter the deep recesses of our being, and produce an ever-lasting effect?

(*b*) *Is "Good" Relative or Absolute?* And we have also to find out whether "Good" is relative or absolute. Shall we say with Hamlet that "there's nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so?", that it is all a relative thing? If "Good" is relative then it is also variable, and we can have no fixed standard of morality. If it is absolute then it should have no reference

to "bad", nor to persons or places. Can we at all find out such an absolute "Good"? With all human limitations, can we think of "Good" which may have no reference to humanity? Can we continue to be men and still think as non-men? Can we as human beings transcend the limits of human thinking, and lay our hands on "Good" which is not relative to persons or places, which is not good for such and such a being, but is a universal, absolute "Good"—"good" for all, beasts, men, angels, gods and all—"Good" in itself and by itself, independent and transcendent, having no reference to "bad", nor to the mental and moral constitution of man, nor to anything else. Can a man see things green or white if he is always wearing blue glasses? We must see things, not as they are in themselves, but as they are for us, as they appear to human organs and senses. Thus we can neither take our stand on "absolute" good, nor does "relative" good satisfy our desire for a permanent criterion of morality. Then

what kind of thing is "Good" ?

(*c*) *What is Right.* Let us also see how we can determine right and wrong action. "Good", as we have seen, is the goal we have to aim at in this world ; it is, so to speak, the end of our life. Now "Right" is that action which promotes the realisation of the "Good" ; and that which retards it is "Wrong". Thus "Right" and "Wrong" have no meaning independently of the "Good". It is our idea of the "Good" which decides for us what is right and what is wrong. Therefore so long as we do not know what "Good" is, we are not in a position to tackle the question of "Right" and "Wrong" action.

In fact the question of "action" does not arise, unless we know what the reality of our being is, and what the reality of this world in which we move is ; for action does not mean any kind of movement, it implies conscious willing and knowing. How can a man *act* at all, if he is in utter darkness about himself and his surroundings ?

(*d*) *Question of Free-will.* With regard to the question of "Right" action we should also know whether or not man has "free will".

(1) ***Free-will of Man and Fore-knowledge of God.*** If man has "free will", then it means that he can choose between various alternatives. And so long as the choice is thus open, it is undecided and unsettled, it is uncreated. It may fall on any one of the several alternatives : which that alternative would be is not known yet. It is known to none, not even to God ; for if God knows it, it means that it is already fixed and the man has no choice. Thus if man has "free will", none can have foreknowledge. Even God cannot have foreknowledge. These two things, God's foreknowledge and man's free will, seem to be incompatible.

Against this one may argue that God knows all things of the past, present and future ; but that He does not interfere in man's doings. Just as a man can make a

guess about future happenings, and his guess may turn out to be true. Similarly God can know of future events. But as He is the Most Perfect Being, His guesses are invariably correct. In this manner God may know of the future without influencing human will.

Now, if we examine this kind of reasoning carefully, we find that it is fallacious, and does not really prove the thing that it apparently seems to do.

The first point to be noticed here is that if guess-work must invariably be true as we believe it to be in the case of God, then it ceases to be guess-work. Guess implies some degree of doubt, and as God is supposed to have no doubts, in His case it is knowledge and not guess-work.

Now, for the sake of argument, let us say that God only knows the future actions of man, but does not determine them. This, however, does not help us at all in settling the question of man's "free-will"; because even if God does not determine

our future actions, but so long as He knows them, the fact that they are determined remains—knowledge of a thing presupposes its existence.—Who determines them—whether our own nature through a long chain of cause-and-effect series, or an external agency—is immaterial; for in as much as they are already known, and thus fixed and not left to our free choice to be made *at the moment of action*, they are determined or pre-destined for us.

If a thing must happen in a certain way, although that way is to be arrived at through a long and complicated process of various causes and effects operating at different times and in different places, if the thing cannot happen otherwise, then certainly it is predetermined and fixed. Fore-knowledge invariably and essentially implies pre-destination — the questions: whose fore-knowledge? and who pre-determines?— do not arise.

The point seems to be quite clear; for obviously until the man, who has to decide

between two or more alternatives, is born, the decision is not made, and any one of the various alternatives is possible ; and thus if the thing is undecided, that is, the decision is non-existent, how can it exist or be present in the mind of God or any one else. The decision has yet to be made by the "Free-Will" of the man, who is still unborn. So long as that man is unborn, his free will is also unborn, and consequently his decision is also unborn ; it is in an uncreated state, it does not exist ; it does not exist even in the mind of God ; that is even God does not know of it ; He has no fore-knowledge.

Thus to all appearances it seems that either God has fore-knowledge, or man has free-will. Both things cannot "be" at the same time. If they are, then it is a great and important problem for us to know how such obvious contradictions can be reconciled. What sort of God do we have, who knows what we are doing and what we shall do, and still leaves it to our free choice

to do whatever we like? And what sort of creatures must we be?

(*ii*) *Free-will and Determinism.* But if man has no free-will, then every thing is already fixed for him. He has no choice, and therefore the question of "Right" and "Wrong" does not arise; as Kant says: "Thou ought'st only if thou canst". Consequently there can be no reward or punishment, no morality, no striving or struggling, and no true action. All these lose their significance. We shall, in that case be mere machines, what Des Cartes calles "automatons", which work automatically and mechanically. Is this position tenable? What is the truth?

3. Problem of Misery.

Then, we like to be optimists and take this world to be a place of enjoyment. We try to see pleasure all around us, but what does our experience say? It is no use shutting our eyes to stern facts and living in a fool's paradise. We read books and

hear lectures on "Laughing" No doubt the Philosophy of Laughter is all right in its place, but we must remember that there is another Philosophy also and perhaps a greater Philosophy—the Philosophy of Weeping.

Is not pain a greater reality than pleasure? Does not suffering go deeper into our being? Then what is the cause of this tremendous amount of misery and trouble that we witness in this world? Why all this sorrow and suffering, this pain and poverty, anguish and agony?

When we go into hospitals, poor houses, and orphanages, we are stunned to see humanity reduced to such a wretched plight. Look at the deaf and dumb, the blind and the maimed, the crippled and diseased, the poor and the needy, the hungry and the naked, the homeless and the destitute, and your heart melts like wax, and you cannot check your tears. Why do poor people suffer? Why does not God relieve them? Why is there such a large

number of miserable sufferers in this "blessed" world of a "merciful" God? Is it not a mystery? Does it not demand a solution? Is it not a pressing problem for all who want to know the absolute Truth and the ultimate Reality? Certainly it is. Then what is the solution? There we have to confess our utter ignorance. We are proud of our knowledge, we boast of our achievements, but we know nothing of such fundamental and vital problems. Our boast is vain, our pride is hollow. We are blind, but we know not even our own blindness.

Not only within hospitals and poorhouses but even outside them, we see thousands of people weeping and wailing helplessly like dumb driven cattle, and filling the atmosphere with their heart-rending cries. Every one has his own troubles and sorrows, his private worries and anxieties. Who is there that is truly and perfectly happy? Hardly any. And even so-called pleasures are alloyed with

pain; pure, unmixed happiness is a non-entity. It is a term that is not found in the dictionary of this world.

راحتِ بے رنج در ماتم سرائے خاک نیست ؛ خندۂ گل گریہ ہائے تلخ دارد چوں گلاب

(In this earthly abode of Sorrows, Pleasure free from pain existeth not; even the laughter of the flower, such as the rose hath in it a bitter grief.)

There is no rose without the thorn. All of us are weeping over our lot; and those who are contented still have their share of sorrow.

ਨਾਨਕ ਦੁਖੀਆ ਸਭ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥

(Unhappy is all the world, O Nanak).

If one man has lost his father, another grieves over the death of his mother; if this man has been bereaved of his beloved son, that one has been separated from his dear daughter. Thousands of people are dying every day, leaving behind whole families, miserable and mourning. Widows depriv-ed of the affectionate care and attention of their husbands, little orphans in vain

longing for the caresses and loving words of their departed parents, sisters lamenting the death of their brothers, mothers running mad because of the demise of their only sons,—these are sights that touch even the most callous heart, and melt even adamantine breasts. Who will not shed tears over such pitiable sufferers! Who will not feel for such forlorn and misery-stricken human beings!

When an epidemic — of Plague or Cholera, or Influenza—rages at a place, it works a great havoc among men. People begin to feel the approach of Doomsday. When a big fire breaks out, it consumes many buildings, and devours many persons. If an earthquake comes, a whole city may be utterly devastated and levelled to the ground. And during wars, thousands of people are killed and a universal wailing spreads all around.

What is the explanation of all this misery, and crying, and wailing? Why should such things be found in "the best of

all possible worlds"? Are we not living in a fool's paradise? Do we not hug false hopes and cherish vain desires which are shattered to pieces by the stern facts of experience? When we look at the poor, we see them half-fed and half-clothed, ruthlessly neglected by the world. This world is indeed "a vast vale of tears;" and if it is not, we are sadly deluded. Such a tremendous amount of suffering! Is this the ultimate truth about the world, or have we a more hopeful Reality behind this confusing Phenomena?

4. Problem of Cruelty.

Not only is this question of misery so baffling, but the problem of cruelty is still more confounding. Why should there be so much cruelty in this "beautiful" creation of a "gracious" God.

In this world we see that one species of animals depends for its existence on some other species. If small fish are food for bigger fish like whale and others in the

sea; deer and sheep are food for lions and tigers on land. The dog runs after the cat, and the cat is lying in wait for the mouse. Eagles swoop down on sparrows, and sparrows look about for small insects. Kill others and fill your stomach; destroy others and make your way: That seems to be the principle of existence in this world. Only the strongest survive, the weak go to the wall. If you want to live, you must not mind others' sufferings, you must be cruel to those who are weaker than yourselves.

And among animals one species preys upon only a particular class of other species, but man spares none. Every thing is fit for human consumption. There are countries where snakes, lizards, and such other reptiles are cooked and eaten and others where rats and such small creatures are turned into dishes for the table. Man is most powerful, if not physically, at least intellectually; and consequently he is most merciless. He kills most indiscriminately

and most lavishly. There is no limit to cruelty in his case, or perhaps cruelty has no meaning with him. Thus ruining others is the way of keeping up one's own existence. One's fall is another's rise, one's meat is another's poison. Everywhere life flourishes by destroying life; in all nature the cry is—'Kill' and push up your way.

What is the meaning of such universal killing and destroying, of such enormous barbarity? Is "Kill" the final word, or have we any thing else to say on the point? There are people who are so wicked, that they would not hesitate to take another's life, be it even for a very trivial personal gain? What is the explanation of this hard- heartedness and feelinglessness?

We believe and perhaps rightly, that the end of all must be good, that "every winter must change to spring", but we cannot hoodwink the stern truths of experience. Experience is indeed the best teacher; for it disillusions us at every step. We like to keep to our fond hopes of childhood, and

come out into the world to see it a veritable image of heaven ; but to our dismay and disappointment very soon we find that it is no bed of roses. Its nice-looking orchards are scattered over with prickly shrubs, and deadly serpents creep under its beautiful verdure.

How many good men have not been ill-treated by this "blessed" world ? How many saints and reformers have been left untouched ? Saint Kabir was thrown before a furious elephant to be trampled down under his feet and was hurled into the river Ganges to be drowned and killed. Guru Arjan Dev was placed on red-hot sheets of iron to be parched and shrivelled. Shamas-i-Tabrez was skinned alive, and mercilessly butchered. Guru Teg Bahadur was imprisoned and ruthlessly beheaded at Delhi. Mansur was crucified for his piety and truth, and so was Jesus Christ. The two youngest sons of Guru Gobind Singh were put alive, into a wall which was raised

over their heads. The Greeks treated their saints no better. Socrates was given poison to drink, because he did not believe in the gods of the state, and " corrupted the youths of the city ". This blind and ungrateful world has spared no great man. All were tormented and tortured in their own day.

" Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude".

5. Problem of Death.

Similarly Death is a great mystery. Sooner or later all of us have to leave this world; all have to die and go "we know not where ".

"All human things are subject to Decay,
And when Fate summons, monarchs
must obey."

We know that we have to depart but we know not when. It may be today, it may be tomorrow, but our going is certain. What sort of journey it shall be, we cannot

say ; but go we must. There is no question about that.

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return".—*Bible.*

Although the soul is said to be imperishable, the body must be reduced to ashes one day. But we seldom think of our end. We weep over the death of other people, but never care to contemplate our own fate.

گروہ بر دیگراں نوحہ گری ؛ مدتے بنشیں و بر خود میگری

(For others weepest thou ; O, sit for a time, and weep thou for thyself.)

(*a*) *What is Death* ? Do we feel pain when we die ? If so, how can we avoid that pain? What kind of experience does a man have when he is lying on his death-bed ? What sort of country do people go to after their death ? And what kind of journey is it that they make to the so called next world? Do we know all this ? Not at all. We may guess, we may argue, we may reason and think, we may study and learn from books,

we may stretch our imagination and fancy; but we do not know this mystery. We may have blind belief, but we do not possess certain and clear knowledge. We have all to go to that "undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns". Death spares none. And if die we must, then why shut our eyes to our coming death? Why not face the question boldly?

(b) *Preparation for the Last Journey.* In the world, when we have to go even a small distance, we begin making preparations for the journey long before the time of our departure. We find out the proper conveyance that is to carry us to our destination, write to our friends to receive us, or wire to reserve accommodation in a hotel for our night's rest, and send word to the man in charge of the conveyance to book a seat for us. We do not undertake a journey haphazardly, but make all sorts of provisions beforehand; and when we start, we take lots of things with us for

use in the way, such as tiffin-carriers full of various kinds of food to appease our hunger, and rugs and blankets to protect us from cold. Further, when we travel in foreign countries, we take some 'knowing' person with us to serve as a guide.

But what preparation have we made for our journey to the next world? We have to go to an unfamiliar and strange place, and we may be called even today. Are we prepared? Have we made any arrangements for conveyance, and for food in the way? Have we secured any guide to lead us on the right track? Have we got any friend to receive us there? No, we have not; we have not even discovered what place we are bound for, and what sort of friends we can have there.

(*c*) ***Ever a Possibility.*** It is very astonishing indeed that we seldom think of death, although it may occur at any moment. For us there are always two possibilities—Life or Death. We are so much taken up with the thoughts of this 'life' that we

have no time to think of the other alternative, *viz* 'Death'. Our wisdom is confined to the concerns of this world ; and we are extremely inconsistent, because we do not use our prudence for our spiritual welfare. In worldly affairs we are very wise. In earning our daily bread we try to be extra clever, and make as much money as we can by working hard day and night ; but we never realise that this body, for which we do so much, is after all to be taken away from us.

In the world whenever we want to do a thing, we think of and provide beforehand for all the alternatives that there may be ; but alas ! we always ignore one which is ever possible, and that is "Death." We know what we will do if we live, but we know not what we shall do if we die. If we live we shall want a house to dwell in, food to eat, clothes to wear, and so on, and we have already procured these things for our future use ; but if we die we have made no provisions. We have not even

cared to find out what provisions can be made for this alternative.

6. Problem of Relativity.

Finally, every thing seems to be relative in this world; it has a significance and existence only relatively to other things. Is this relativity true? If it is, then the world may be a mere delusion; it may have an existence as such only relatively to us. Even our own selves as men may be unreal; we may be human beings only relatively to other things of this world. We may not be so many different entities; our difference might be merely relative to our environment. Time and Space, Goodness and Badness, Free-will and Determinism, Pleasure and Pain, Life and Death, these may have no existence in the absolute Reality; they might be real only relatively to our existence as men. Constituted as we are at present, we cannot know a thing unless that thing is relative to something else; it must have a

centre of reference. For instance we know good only if we distinguish it from bad, but goodness and badness may have no meaning where there is absolute Reality. Relativity perhaps comes in wherever there is variety. In the Absolute there might be perfect unity. Then what is the truth? Is this world relative or absolute? If relative, then it would lose its reality as a physical world; if absolute, then how is its variety to be explained? What is the final truth?

Significance of these Problems.

When we talk in this vein, we may be charged with the sin, of pessimism, of putting up the dark side of things. If stating plain facts even when they happen to be unpleasant is a sin, then we plead guilty to the charge. But guilty or not guilty, the stern facts are still there. When a cat comes to pounce upon a pigeon, the latter closes its eyes to keep away the dreadful sight. But that does not send the cat away;

it is still there to kill the pigeon. Similarly by shutting our eyes to "facts" we do not drive them away; rather we ourselves are driven along by them. It is neither wise nor manly to turn one's back to an approaching danger. The brave man is he who faces the danger boldly, and tries to overcome all difficulties.

If we think seriously and deeply on ourselves, we cannot overlook or evade these questions. These are the fundamental problems of life which spring up with the very dawn of consciousness. Until we solve them we cannot move an inch, we cannot take a step. Even the most momentous affair of this world dwindles into insignificance before these vital inquiries. They touch us to the core; they go deep into our very being; they are questions of life and death for us.

In pitch darkness as we are, we know neither ourselves, nor other people, nor our surroundings. Like blind men we merely grope in the dark, and are blown hither

and thither by every waft of the wind of causation, or Karmas or destiny.

We are in a deep slumber that takes away from us all true consciousness and sensibility; we are in an intoxication that does not let us attend to our most serious concern, that keeps us out of our wits, so to speak, and makes us neglect what is of foremost importance. We are not in our senses; our wits are gone wool-gathering. Bhartrihari says:—

"पीत्वा मोहमयीं प्रमादमदिरामुन्मत्त भूतं जगत् ।"

(Having drunk the wine of negligence full of delusoin, the world has turned mad with intoxication.)

What a wonder that we investigate every thing of the world, but never care to look into our own "self"! We leave out no object in nature from our study; but alas! we shut our eyes to the reality and essence of our own being. If we sit down to collect ourselves and think on the situation in which we are, we find ourselves in utter darkness and extreme ignorance

about things which touch us most vitally. Every one of us is truly—

"A child crying in the night,
A child crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry"

We should try to go out of this night into the day, and find out the land of Light and Happiness, so that we may cry no more.

Solutions of these Problems.

But is there any way that may lead us out of the universal darkness of this physical world and land us in the world of Light and Truth and Reality ? Are there any satisfactory answers to these fundamental problems of ours?

The world offers a variety of solutions. For the sake of convenience we may divide them into three classes: Philosophical, Religious, and Spiritual.

(*i*) ***Philosophical***. Philosophy attacks these questions with the weapon of Reason. The organ of Philosophy is the Intellect, for it is through the Thinking faculty that Philo-

sophers have attempted a solution of these problems.

(*ii*) *Religions.* Religion deals mainly with feelings, and tries to find out the true answers to these questions through Emotion. Every religion lays stress on devotion, faith and "feelingfulness". Religions inculcate that through religious emotion. God is most immediate to man. Feeling, emotion and devotional attitude of the heart—such are the things that Religion goes after. The performance of certain external rites is also part of devotion according to most religions.

(*iii*) *Spirituality.* Spirituality, as saints tell us, depends neither on the Intellect, nor on Feelings and Emotion in the ordinary sense. It concerns the transcendent experiences of an individual beyond the sphere of Thinking, and above the domain of Feeling. Spiritual knowledge transcends the experiences of an ordinary man. It is the superhuman power of the naked soul which yields us direct realisation and that is

the organ of Spirituality. It is a higher and surer faculty than the five senses or the Intellect; it leads us into a spiritual transport and brings about a transcendent communion of the Individual with the Universal; it carries us into a supra-sensible rapture or ecstasy which penetrates all Phenomena, and lays bare to our inner eye the very core of Reality and Truth.

Let us now take these three one by one, and examine the solutions that each one of them has to offer.

CHAPTER II.

Solution offered by Philosophy.

Philosophy is an attempt to understand the mystery of the universe by means of the Intellect. Different sciences deal with particular bits of Experience; Philosophy handles Experience as a whole, and tries to get at the Reality behind all Phenomena with the help of Reason.

1. Various Philosophical Theories.

There are various theories of Philosophy all of which endeavour to solve these fundamental problems. From the times of early Greeks, Philosophy has been struggling to find out the right version of the Reality of this changing Phenomena, and that struggle is going on still.

Socrates laid stress on the knowledge of 'self', as a preliminary and essential

condition to the knowledge of Reality. Plato put forward his "World of Ideas" which he believed to be more real than this physical, material world, and he assigned the greatest reality to the "Idea of Good." But he used the word "Idea" in a very special sense—in the sense of universal concepts or categories, or so, as several modern Philosophers think, or perhaps in the sense of subtle ethereal, astral or causal entities [सूक्षम जगत (Suksham Jagat), Astral plane, or कारण लोक (Karan loka)—Causal Sphere—of the Hindus] as some other people hold. Aristotle, they say, found Reality to belong, perhaps, not so much to static things as to "Process" or "Change" itself.

In modern times, the Rationalists take to be real which is rational, which is a consistent and systemetic whole. Critics, however, point out that here we have only the "what" of things, *i. e.*, abstract attributes, and miss the "that" *i. e.*, existence and substantiality. Critical Rationalism is

said to be an attempt "to find out Reality by analysing consciousness (i. e. Intellect) itself". "Applying the principles of Identity and Contradiction to given propositions, the Rationalists want to prove by subjective reasoning the existence or non-existence of objective things".

Kant, the great German Philosopher, pointed out that absolute Reality could never be known through pure Reason. What we do know by means of the Intellect is Phenomena. Causation, Time, Space, Substantiality, Uniformity of Nature etc. are merely ".Catagories of the Mind and the Sensibility", and are so far subjective. Objective Reality or Noumena is for ever beyond the reach of our thinking faculty. Thus Kant admits in so many words that pure philosophy can never find out God or any other transcendent entity. When he tries to show the necessity of the existence of God on other considerations than those of "pure" Reason, he is going beyond the sphere of Philoso-

phy as such.

Hegel, the father of modern Idealism, states that Reality belongs only to the whole, which in its unreal parts appears as "many" and physical, but which in its wholeness is "one", unanalysable, spiritual, conscious Being.

But his theory too has been set aside by the present day theory of new Realism, which affirms that, though things are not what they seem to be, yet they are not unreal as Idealists hold, but real. Each one of them has a distinct existence.

Then there are the Pragmatists who uphold that that is True which is useful. The Theory of Pragmatism concerns itself with workable Truth only; it does not bother about absolute Truth. However the contention of the Pragmatists is that workable or relative truth is all that we need to know in this world; that as absolute Truth, if any there is at all, has no bearing on our present actions, it is out of place in this world of ours, and conse-

quently any talk of it is futile.

Whatever the trend of thought, Philosophy has through all ages kept up the distinction between "Appearance" and "Reality", which shows that the world is not what it appears to be; but has perhaps a deeper Reality behind or beyond Phenomena.

What that Reality is, if there is any such, we have still to see.

(*a*) *Philosophical Theories are Conflicting.* When we study the various schools of Philosophy, we find that they support opposing and conflicting views. Realism gives distinct "Reality" to every individual bit of Experience, and thus we have a variety of "Real" things. Idealiam, on the other hand, looks upon only one thing as Real, which by some delusion appears to be "many". According to this theory, "manyness" of the world is a deception; "Reality" is always "One" single, indivisible, by itself, and in itself. Rationalism lays emphasis on consistency; for, it that

theory is correct which gives us the most consistent account of this varied phenomena of the world. Pragmatism looks upon that as true which helps us in our daily actions. But as Philosophical theories are conflicting, we cannot say which embodies the true version of Reality. No single theory appeals to all, and consequently universal verdict is out of the question in this matter.

Apart from this insurmountable difficulty, we have also to see if the organ of Philosophy, *viz.*, Intellect, is the right organ or faculty for knowing transcendent truths and absolute Reality. If after examination we find that "Intellect" is inadequate to deal with transcendent entities, then we shall come to the conclusion that no philosophical theory whatsoever, whether of the past, the present, or even the future, can yield us knowledge of absolute Reality. So let us first find out what the limitations of intellectual knowledge are.

2. Intellect does not give us True Knowledge.

What is true knowledge ? Can Intellect give us true and certain knowledge of anything at all ? Can it unveil for us the hidden mysteries of the universe, and disclose its transcendent secrets?

Now it is obvious that

(1) What is true to-day must be true tomorrow,

and (2) What is true for one man must be true for all.

If what we know to be true to-day becomes untrue later on, then it only means that our knowledge is defective and unreliable; it is not true knowledge. If a thing is true, it is true at all times and for all men. Truth must be the same for all; it cannot be different for different persons, or at different times. It must have objective validity, and universal constancy.

(*a*) *Intellect Changes with Time.* Now let us see if Intellectual knowledge—knowledge

acquired through the Intellect—conforms to this standard. First of all, is such knowledge constant? Does it remain the same at all times? Does our intellect stick to its judgments? Does it not change its own verdicts? It is a fact of every-day experience that Intellect changes its judgments from day to day. What my Intellect finds right and true to-day, it may not do so to-morrow. Intellect at best gives us theories, and theories change from time to time. Old theories are set aside by new ones, and those in their turn make way for still others. "Old order changeth yielding place to new" is as true in our beliefs as in our actions. Heat was once looked upon as something material, but later it was discovered to be purely energy; and our ideas of "matter" and "energy" are themselves liable to change. The ancients thought that the Sun moved round the Earth, but the verdict of the Intellect now is that the Earth rotates round the Sun. Why do people change

their religions? Simply because what seemed right and true to their Intellect before does not do so now. One thing appeals to my Intellect at one time but at another it does not, even if the thing be true in itself. Intellect changes its pronouncements very frequently indeed.

Moreover our Intellect is not the same in youth as it was in childhood; and in old age it will be different still. With the course of time, it is undergoing a perpetual change. As it changes itself, so do its points-of-view; and consequently its judgments vary from day to day. Who can depend on such a variable judge?

Further, it is not only with age that our Intellect changes, but also with different moods and mental states. We reason one way when we are in an emotion, and quite another way when out of it. In anger, in passion. in lust and greed, the Intellect speaks through the mouthpiece of the mood. We are men of moods, and our Intellect swings to and fro like a

weather-cock by the impulse of the moment. Our Intellect is not a constant and fixed thing. It is a faculty that grows and decays. In love, in hate, in pleasure, in pain, in health, in illness, with every change of mood and temper, it judges of things differently. Keen feeling is inimical to intellection.

(*b*) *Intellect Changes with Place and Person.* Nor is intellectual knowledge universally true. If Intellect were a true and reliable source of information, it would give the same knowledge to all. The knowledge of two men about the same thing should not be different. But it is. There is hardly any thing in the world on which all people agree. Intellect of different persons dictates differently. Even prodigies of Intellect differ among themselves, and differ on most fundamental and obvious points. If Idealists deny the existence of matter, Materialists recognize no mind. Similarly about ethical questions, there is a vast difference among various

schools of morality. If one believes "Pleasure" to be the highest good, another looks upon "Self-Realisation" as the *Summum bonum*. Among such conflicting views our Intellect gets baffled and perplexed, and we are at a loss to find our way out.

Universal agreement on questions which rest on Intellect for their validity and truth, is extremely rare. If intellect were really a true source of knowledge, how could so many different schools of thought have arisen? Who would have formulated so many different theories of Philosophy? The one right and true version should have appealed to the Intellect of all, and no new theory would have been started. But the judgment of Intellect varies from time to time and from person to person; and new theories are propounded every day.

Our intellect reasons in two ways—Deductive and Inductive. These are the only two methods of inference open to human intelligence. Now, Deduction gives

us certain conclusions, but there is nothing entirely new in them. Those conclusions are already implicitly contained in the data. Induction gives us new knowledge, but alas! Its conclusions can never reach the degree of absolute certainty. Thus certain, reliable new knowledge is beyond us. At least our intellect cannot get at it.

In fact like other human faculties and senses, intellect is also personal, private, and subjective. There is no such thing as Universal Reason any more than universal feeling, universal willing, universal hearing, universal smelling, and universal sight. Just as my experiences got through my senses are mine, and my feelings and emotions are strictly speaking private to myself, similarly my Intellect and Reasoning are my own. Universal Reason, which modern Philosophers make so much of, is a chimera. Reason is private and subjective, and as such it may not yield us true knowledge of objective Reality.

Reason in man is a sort of a great bluff of Nature. Although it is a limited faculty, it seems as if it were unlimited and infinite. Secondly, it is very unreliable and uncertain, but it makes one feel that it is an extremely reliable source of true knowledge and wisdom. Almost every man looks upon himself as a very wise man, and judges all others by his own standard. Reason has thrown all of us into this delusion and we depend on this frail faculty even for getting knowledge of transcendent Truths, with the consequence that we keep groping in the dark, and never seek that Inner light, which alone reveals Reality.

This faculty of the Intellect is altogether inadequate for dealing with transcendent entities. When it cannot give us reliable knowledge even of the things of this world, how can we expect it to throw light on things of the next world, on non-material and non-physical things, on subtle ethereal entities,

on soul and God ? Intellect can never get at the bottom of Reality, though it may go on trying for ages.

صدیوں فلاسفی کی چُناں وچُنیں رہی ∴ لیکن خدا کی بات جہاں تھی وہیں رہی

[Philosophysing has been going on for ages, but our knowledge of God hath not advanced even an inch.]

Philosophers are as ignorant of God or Reality now as they were ever before. Intellect or "Reason" has been struggling from the first to get a clue to the hidden mystery of this phenomena and dive deep into the Reality beneath ; but all history of Philosophy is a standing record of its continuous series of vain efforts.

3. Intellectual Knowledge is not Effective in Action.

We have seen that, as Intellect changes its verdict with time, place and person, it is not a source of true and reliable information. But there is also another grave

defect in intellectual knowledge ; it is not effective in action ; it does not control or guide our practical life.

We know several things with the Intellect, which we fail to put into practice. We know we should not do a certain thing because it is harmful, but we do it still ; we cannot help it. The doer seems to be a different person from the knower, and the doer is the stronger of the two. Which is the real person or individual here, the doer or the knower ? Certainly not the knower, for he is set aside by the doer—but it cannot be the doer alone, for the knower is still there. Then what is this division in the same person ? He knows but he is helpless. He knows he should not drink, for instance; but when the glass of wine is before him he drinks inspite of himself and his knowledge. He is carried away by the impulse of the moment, and his knowledge stands aloof merely to see the fun. What is this knowledge that is not ours but sticks to us : that is *with* us but

not *for* us? It is more or less like a bag of sweetmeat put on the back of a donkey, who has to bear the burden but can make no use of it. The poor creature has all those eatables with him, and possesses them in a way; but he cannot eat them. Similarly we have our intellectual knowledge, which is a burden on our memory; but it is of no use to us, for our action is independent of it. *We* act. *we* move, *we* will, and *we* do; but *our* intellectual knowledge stands apart to come back to us when our work is over.

Intellect sometimes cries hard, but the passion and impulse of the moment have no ear for it. Intellect calmly thinks out and informs us of its well-weighed decisions but the "hot passion oversteps the cold decrees of Reason." It is not easy to curb one's passions. Our Intellect is helpless before their tremendous sway. They carry everybody before them as a tempest drives along all dry leaves and straw. Intellectual knowledge is cold and

dry ; it lacks the genuine warmth and vitality of transcendent realisation.

ای مقلد صد دلیل و صد بیان ÷ بر زبان آرد ندارد هیچ جان

[That philosopher puts forth his hundred and one arguments and theories, but only lip-say are these, for they have no life.]

If we really know, then we know when we do not act and we also know when we act. Why should our knowledge not enter our volition, and control our actions? Socrates and Plato said rightly that *to know* what is "good" is *to be* good. Knowing is really becoming if the knowledge is true and real. That knowledge which we say we possess; but which is powerless to dictate when we are acting, is not worthy of the name of knowledge.

It is a mere sham. The so-called knowledge that depends on the Intellect is always lame and blind. It is lame because it cannot guide us, it cannot help

us in our life of action; it is blind because it is variable, and consequently unreliable.

4. Intellect Cannot Deal with Total Phenomena.

Further Intellect cannot handle total phenomena, and therefore also it cannot fathom the depth of that Phenomena. Intellect cannot grasp the whole of Phenomena—"The Totality of Experience"—because for it the object must remain "another." Now, that "other" which is the object cannot include the subject *i.e.*, the knowing mind. Howsoever hard we may try to grasp the total whole, we can never include the knowing subject in the object of our knowledge; and hence the most we ca ndo is to think of the whole universe or the whole Phenomena, minus our own mind or Intellect. This is due to the fundamental Duality of Psychology. There must be at least two entities for any intellectual knowledge to be possible at all *viz.*, the subject knowing and the object

known. We cannot think of that thing which may include and comprehend both.

Everything that we know is a part of Phenomena, and similarly our Intellect is a part of it; but no one part can contain the whole.

And if Reality in its "wholeness" is not what it appears to be in its parts, then our Intellect can never know it. If the whole Reality is one and indivisible,—and who knows it may be,—then its so-called parts must be unreal, and in that case any one *unreal part* cannot presume to know the *real Unity* or the *real Whole.*

At any rate this much is plain that human intelligence is too feeble and too frail to comprehend Reality either in its totality or in its absoluteness.

5. Summary and Conclusion.

To sum up, the solutions offered to our Fundamental Problems by Philosophy are unsatisfactory, for Philosophy can never give us sure knowledge. The various

Philosophical theories are conflicting and therefore confusing. Further the organ of Philosophy is Intellect, which is a variable thing ; it changes its verdict with time and place, with mood and temper, with physical conditions and mental states, and with age and experience. Also there are only two ways of reasoning – Deductive and Inductive. The former gives us no new knowledge, and the conclusions of the latter ever remain uncertain and unreliable. Thus "reliable" "*new*" knowledge is beyond our intellect. Moreover intellectual knowledge is not effective in action ; it does not control our volition. It is not truly ours, for it does not help us in our life of action and cannot stop us from going wrong. And lastly, Intellect cannot handle total Phenomena, or the complete whole, because for it the object of knowledge must always remain "another." It cannot view the total whole, for howsoever hard it may try, it itself shall ever be absent from the object perceived

or conceived. So long as we remain on the Intellectual level, we cannot get over this fundamental duality of Psychology. We may go above the plane of the Intellect if we can, and know Reality by becoming that Reality ourselves if possible; but this much is clear and certain that with the Intellect we can never find out absolute Reality.

CHAPTER III.

Solutions offered by the Religion

RELIGION lays great stress on feeling, and brings the emotional side of man to the fore-front. Religious emotion, faith and devotion to the Deity are, we are told, the means of attaining to the state of absolute knowledge and supreme bliss.

1. Various Religions.

There are various religions in the world, and each has its own set of doctrines and dogmas, its own rites and rituals, forms and ceremonies.

Christianity believes in the Trinity of God. Jesus Christ the Son, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost are considered to be "three in one". According to this religion, salvation cannot be had but by faith in the Lord Christ the Saviour, who

died on the cross to wash away and pay for the sins of mankind. Their sacred book is the holy Bible.

Similarly Mohammadans look upon the Prophet Mohammad as the greatest Prophet; and without faith in him and the holy Quran, they believe, there can be no salvation.

Hindus uphold all sorts of doctrines and principles. In fact Hinduism of to-day is hardly a religion; it is more or less a community. All shades of religious belief, all kinds of tenets and dogmas, and all schools of thought, find room in the vast ocean of Hinduism. Within its fold we come across all sorts of people,—Theists, Atheists, Pantheists, Polytheists and all; and "belief in Witchcraft and Sorcery, and in all kinds of evil Spirits, exists alongside of the highest kind of Idealism, Monism, and Monotheism." Some Hindus have faith in Incarnations and Idol worship, some believe in pure and abstract meditation, and some others simply aim at lead-

ing a chaste and active life. Arya Samajists and Sanatanists take the holy Vedas to be the highest revealed books, but their interpretation of these is different. There are several free-thinkers among the Hindus, and there is room for all.

Sikhs believe in the ten Gurus and their holy writings, and depend for their salvation on their staunch faith in the Gurus, and the recital of "Guru Granth Sahib". Similarly Buddhists, Jains, and others, believe in their own saints and their own holy books, and seek salvation through such a belief.

Now all religions have their own forms of worship and prayer, their own fasts and pilgrimages, and their own temples, mosques, and churches. And Religion for many people consists merely in the external observance of the prescribed ritual, in the performance of set ceremonies, and pilgrimages to the holy places. But this all seems to be groping in the dark, for God is not material or physical, that He

may be sought for in this material world and with this physical body. It appears that all external rites and forms are useful only so far as they arouse our religious emotion, and instil in us the spirit of devotion, but no further. They do not open our inner eyes to show us transcendent reality.

Of course all these religions preach morality, and induce us to tread in the footsteps of great personages; but their answers to our fundamental questions are very divergent. Let us see how far they help us in solving our problems.

(*a*) *Religions are Conflicting*. In the first place we notice that the solutions offered by various religions are contradictory and opposed to one another. Religions do not agree and lead us different ways, and put up different ideals before us. One religion points to us one way for realising God, another tells us some other way, and so on with all. Now, can we by any means find out which religion is true?

These religions set up conflicting principles, yet all claim to have "Truth" on their side. How can we discover that Truth?

(*b*) *We cannot Study all Religions.* Should we read the sacred books of all religions, and then find out from our personal first hand study which shows the right path ? This we eannot do. Human life is too short for the study even of one-tenth of the religions of the world. And then it is very difficult to say how much time should be devoted to each, and what criterion of efficiency should be set up for the study.

Secondly even after our study, we shall judge the relative merits of these religions with the help of our Intellect, which has been shown in the last chapter to be unreliable. What shall we do then? Shall we say that all religions are equally good, and all ultimately take us to God? It may be true, perhaps, that all roads lead to Rome, but we are not sure. How can we make sure, and stand on firm ground ? That is the question.

2. Common Features of all Religions.

For this let us consider the essential points and common features of all religions, and see if Religion as such can at all yield us a satisfactory solution to our problems.

First of all we find that every religion requires us to have faith in some old prophet, saint, or incarnation, and in his writings. Christianity wants us to believe in Jesus Christ and the holy Bible, Mohammadanism in the Prophet Mohammad and the holy Quran, and similarly other religions in their own saints and their holy writings—Kabir Panthis in saint Kabir and his books, Dadu-panthis in Dadu Dyal and his utterances and so on with Nanak-panthis, Paltu-panthis and others. Sikhs believe not in one saint, but in the ten Gurus and their sacred writings; though the principles are the same. We have to depend for our salvation on saints of the past and their holy books.

This kind of faith may, and does, give some sort of answer to our questions.

Hindus believe in their स्वर्ग "Swarga" and नरक "Naraka", Mohammadans in their دوزخ "Dozakh" and بهشت "Bahisht", and Christians in their "Heaven" and "Hell." In every religion there are tenets and dogmas, which embody a solution to our problems. But as already stated, the principles and doctrines of various religions are so conflicting that one is at a loss to know where the Truth lies. There is not one accepted way to reach Heaven; every religion puts forth its own different method. Consequently, for a third person these religions present but a confused mass of contradictory principles and conflicting doctrines, which lead one nowhere.

Secondly even if a man does succeed in finding out any one religion which satisfies him, this intellectual satisfaction is not reliable at all. Shall we ultimately fall back on the same organ for our knowledge, which we rejected in the case of Philosophy? No, either we must find out some other means of knowing "Truth," or

confess our inability to do so.

Now, there are certain things about Religion which make it very unsatisfactory for our purpose; and those apply, not to any one religion, but to all religions whatso-ever of the whole world.

3. Religion gives only Second-hand Information.

Firstly we see that Religion does not give us a personal experience of transcendent truths : it does not yield us first-hand knowledge. Some great person, prophet or saint, had some spiritual realisation, which was recorded in a book. Now. we depend for our faith on such writings. We do not have those transcendent experiences ourselves, but remain content with reading the accounts of others. Those saints and prophets had spiritual insight, and gained knowledge of transcendent entities; but we merely study their descriptions, and rely on second-hand information. Instead of trying to attain

to their high stage of transcendent intuition and spiritual insight, we merely read their reports, and take things on faith. But this is not enough. We cannot get the taste of sweetmeat by merely reading of sweets, nor can our hunger be appeased by a study of the cookery-book.

4. Different Interpretations of Religious Writings.

Moreover the holy books of various religions depend for their explanation on the mercy of individual interpretation, which leaves room for difference and discord. Different people understand and interpret religious writings differently, and there is no way for a layman to find out the right meanings. We do not know exactly what the writer wanted to convey by his words, and he is not there to tell us what he meant. We therefore understand him according to our own thoughts, and read him in the light of our own ideas. Thus what we get is not sure and reliable

knowledge, but only opinion and guess-work.

In fact most of the religious books of the world make use of technical phraseology, and consequently we find it difficult to follow them. Only that person can understand and explain such writings in a satisfactory manner who has had a proper training, and who is thoroughly initiated into the secrets of spiritual insight and inner realisation. Just as a layman cannot understand technical books on special sciences, unless he first gets a grounding under a competent teacher, similarly we cannot make out the real import of religious books without the aid of a proper teacher—a person who has himself attained to a union with God and secured a first hand transcendent knowledge of spiritual secrets and subtle entities.

5. Mere Emotion is Blind.

Further, mere emotion or feeling

which Religion inculcates, is blind. It may take us the right way, it may lead us astray. If people find emotion and feeling to be of great help in the realisation of God, it is emotion and impulse of worldly love and attachment that keeps many from seeking the Light of Truth. Emotion in itself is blind. It must be guided by true knowledge. A blind man cannot walk with safety unless he gets his vision restored.

But intellectual knowledge cannot be a right guide to emotion, for intellect is itself unreliable. If one blind man leads another, both may fall into a pit. If intellect leads emotion, they are liable to go wrong. We want some higher knowledge, some sort of transcendent Intuition, to direct emotion into the proper channel, so that we may be sure of our way. With mere emotion, we are not on safe ground.

6. Religious Belief is in fact, only Prejudice.

Now, so long as we do not have true

transcendent knowledge, what is our religious belief ? Is it not sheer prejudice or bias ? If there had been only one religion, and only one version of the next world, we might have put our faith in that religion with some show of reason, although the belief would still have been blind ; but now when we have so many distinct religions before us, each with its own account of Reality, why should we accept the story of one and reject those of others ?

Generally we get our religion from our birth. We are Hindus if we are born in a Hindu family ; we are Mohammadans, and believe in the Prophet Mohammad and the holy Quran, if we get birth in a Mohammadon house ; and we are Christians, and believe in Jesus Christ and the holy Bible, if our parents happen to be Christians. In course of time, our ideas get fixed into our minds ; and due to long association, our religion becomes but a bundle of deep set prejudices. We begin in childhood with religious bias ; and as

we grow up, our prejudices go on getting a firmer hold on us, till we find them masters over us in our mature age.

If, for a moment, we think calmly, collectedly, and unbiasedly we shall realize that our so-called religious knowledge is but a string of long cherished prejudices. "Our prejudices imprison us, and like mad men we take our jailors for a guard of honour." The prejudice may be wrong, it may be right. That we do not know, for we possess no sure knowledge. If we are on the right path, it is a lucky chance; if we are wrong, then it is our misfortune; but in either case we are ignorant, and our so called religious knowledge is not true knowledge, but guess work, conjecture, and prejudice.

7. Within the Sphere of Intellect.

And lastly, as in Philosophy so in religion, we depend ultimately on the Intellect. And if Intellect is unreliable as it has been proved to be in the last chapter,

how can religion give us reliable knowledge when it depends on an unreliable source. If Intellect were reliable, it would not change its verdict, which it does so very frequently. Mohammadanism may seem to a man to be the true path to-day, but Christianity may do so tomorrow; and what guarantee is there that some other religion will not appeal to him the next day? If a man gives up one religion and embraces another, it does not necessarily show the weakness and falsity of the one, nor the strength and truth of the other. It might merely betray the changeful mood of his own mental state. If Intellect changes its verdict once, it may do so hundreds of times; and when Intellect changes its judgment even for once, it is clear that either it was mistaken before, or is mistaken now, or has been so both times. Hence the Intellect has erred, and is therefore always liable to err.

Moreover with the Intellect, we cannot judge of the Intellect. Even if the judg-

ment of the Intellect be right, we cannot know this with the Intellect. We want some higher faculty to judge this. The reason for this deficiency in intellectual knowledge may be, that at the intellectual level, we cannot have perfect knowledge of all facts to be able to judge rightly and with certainty ; but whatever the reason, it remains a fact that Intellect can never give us sure and certain knowledge.

8. Recapitulation and Conclusion.

So we see that the solutions offered by Religion to our fundamental problems are unsatisfactory, because firstly various religions present conflicting and therefore confusing views ; secondly we cannot study all religions in the short span of human life, and consequently personal study is out of the question ; thirdly, religions depend on books, which provide us with second-hand information, and instead of the thing itself, they give us only a description of it ; fourthly, these books

are at the mercy of individual interpretation, which is varying and divergent; fifthly, emotion, which is the chief source of religious inspiration, is in itself blind; and lastly, all religions depend ultimately on Intellect, which has been shown in the last chapter to be unreliable and uncertain. Religious belief is more or less our deep-set prejudice, for in fact we know nothing of transcendent truths. With the Intellect, we can never judge of the Intellect; for true knowledge, we want a higher faculty.

CHAPTER IV.

Solutions of the Spiritual Path of Saints or Santmat (सन्त मत)

BEFORE we discuss the solutions of Santmat, we must first know what Santmat itself is. Only after making sure of what it is, and how it handles our fundamental problems of life, shall we be in a position to judge of the solutions that it may have to offer.

1. What is Santmat

Ordinarily by Spirituality we understand some mysterious sort of feeling or instinct or imagination ; but Spiritual insight is entirely different from intellectual imagination and instinctive intuition.

(*a*) *Indefinable.* How can we define Sanmat or the Spiritual Path when it is neither a theory nor a belief, neither a reasoning nor a guessing, neither a thinking nor a feeling, neither perception nor conception, neither

thought nor imagination, neither instinct nor intuition ?It is nothing of what we usually experience. It is a spiritual concentration that leads a man beyond the senses and intellect into a superconscious state of ecstatic rapture, into a kind of heavenly transport, which yields him an immediate personal transcendent knowledge of absolute Reality.

Philosophers look upon Spirituality as a theory of Philosophy, but it is not a theory at all. It is that inner, spiritual, superconscious realisation, or revelation which transcends all the ordinary faculties of man, which is above and beyond sensation and perception, thinking and imagining beyond all our intellectual knowledge. For that transcendent Light to dawn, thought itself must be suspended.

Spiritual insight is looking within into the subtle realms of the spirit, it is an unfolding of the deep reality of one's Being, and an unveiling of the profound mysteries of the universe. It is a flight of

the soul into rarer regions of naked spirituality, and a beaming forth of the hidden Light of God from the innermost core of Existence. It is a transcendent experience of an individual in a condition of Divine ecstasy, which cannot become the object of 'Thought'; it is a direct spiritual intuition which evades all intellectual grasp. How can we then define it? How even describe it? It is beyond all thought and imagination; it is purely spiritual and transcendent. But it lays bare to our soul the deep reality of all things, and shows in its naked essence the absolute Truth of all times.

Santmat opens to our inner being a mysterious 'Music' that proceeds from the deep recesses of Existence, a mysterious 'Light' that emanates from the bosom of Transcendence, a mysterious "Inspiration" that draws its breath from the Fountain-head of Life. But the Intellect cannot know that Inspiration, the eye cannot see that Light, nor can the ear

hear that music. Only the naked soul realises the subtle Transcendence in an immortal moment of spiritual intoxication; only in a maddening ecstasy of Divine illumination doth the soul rise on the wings of Transcendent Love to spiritual heights of subtler spheres; only in a transporting rapture of Transcendent Knowledge doth the soul embrace the Universal Eternal One,—Absolute, Real, True, Blissful, the source of all Being and Existence, the fountain-head of all life and Light.

Thus Spiritual intuition transcends all thinking and imagining; it leaves behind all definition and description. Pen cannot write it, tongue cannot utter it, words cannot convey it, language cannot express it. Yet it is there—the inexpressible Reality of all realities, the unutterable Truth of all truths. That transcendent knowledge.

लिखा लिखी की है नहीं, देखा देखी की बात ॥

(It is not a matter of writing and reading, but of actual seeing.)

Spiritual knowledge defies expression, for it does not deal with things of this world, which are known to everybody: but it concerns subtle transcendent entities which practically nobody knows, which are beyond the common experience of man, and which have therefore no names assigned to them by the world at large.

भीखा बात अगम की , कहन सुनन की नाहिं ।
जो जाने सो कहे ना , कहे सो जाने नाहिं ॥

(Words embody not the secret of Transcendence. O Bhikha, who knoweth doth not say, who saith doth not know).

We may talk of mystic knowledge and spiritual transport, but the actual state of spiritual realisation and ecstatic rapture cannot be reduced to words. That transcendent knowledge cannot be had save through actual experience.

सूर दास समझे की या गति । ज्यों गूंगो गुड़ खायो ॥

(Of the "Knowing one" the condition

is such, O Soordas, as a mute person eateth sweets.) Neither can give vent to the joy of his experience.

ਕਹਿਬੇ ਕੋ ਸ਼ੋਭਾ ਨਹੀ। ਦੇਖਾ ਹੀ ਪਰਵਾਨ॥

(Saying mattereth not; seeing alone counteth)

Guru Gobind Singh.

Thus Truths of Spirituality are strictly speaking indescribable; but unfortunately in this world we have no other means of expressing ourselves to others except language, and even saints have to make use of this vehicle, although it is not adequate for their purpose. Consequently all effort to convey spiritual knowledge through words falls far short of its desired end, and to a layman spiritual writings must give but a dim and vague notion of that which is in reality beyond notions.

(*b*) *Transcendent.* Thus the first thing that we have to understand about Spiritual insight is, that it is no concern of the intellect or the senses. Spiritual knowledge is

beyond Intellect, for it is an immediate transcendent experience of subtle spiritual entities by the naked soul ; it is a direct realisation of God independent of all thinking and reasoning.

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ।
ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਇ, ਤਾ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥

(Into "Thought" He cometh not, even if thinkest thou millions of times...... Whatever the amount hast thou of wit, there it availeth not)—Guru Nanak.

God can be known only when we go out of our body and mind, so to speak, when we transcend the physical and mental worlds and with a subtle faculty of the naked soul rise higher into purely spiritual realms.

Although strictly speaking not a faculty, let us for covenience denote that power, attribute, quality or essence of the soul or spirit, by means of which we can know the ultimate Reality directly, by the term '*Faculty of Transport*'. It can be roused and

made active in various ways; but before we come to Spiritual methods, let us first make clear what this faculty is, and how it gives us solutions to our fundamental problems.

Independent of the five senses and the thinking mind, Transport is a flash of direct revelation ; it is a sort of spiritual intuition, a transcendent insight, that carries one altogether beyond the reach of ordinary experience, that takes one into an ecstatic rapture of spiritual enlightenment. Saints know the ultimate Reality by a direct personal experience of it on higher planes of consciousness than that of waking. In Transport we know and embrace Reality, in the waking state we perceive only Phenomena. Transcendent knowledge of God, which is open to spiritual intuition is beyond the grip of Reason.

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्त अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
आनन्दम् ब्रह्मनो विद्वान न विभेति कदाचन ।।

(" Wherefrom speech cometh back

along with 'manas' or 'mind' without finding access ; the knower of that bliss of Brahma feareth none").

—Upanishad.

God and all other transcendent entities are beyond Intellectual grasp. We cannot know our soul or spirit by merely reading or thinking.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो ।
न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ॥

(The spirit is found not by the study of the Scriptures, nor by Intellect, nor by much hearing). —Upanishad.

But by spiritual transcendent insight alone can the soul be realised. Only through spiritual transport can the ultimate Reality be perceived, only the naked soul can behold the glory of God.

In fact Spiritual knowledge is not knowledge in the ordinary sense ; it is a spiritual, transcendent experience, which is different from our ordinary experience, not only in degree but in kind, spiritual knowledge belongs to an order or category

which is quite distinct from the knowledge of this world. It is a transport of the soul from the material creation into the astral, causal or still subtler spiritual realms ; it is an unanalysable, transcendent ecstatic intuition which reveals Reality to the naked soul, bathed in divine lustre. That divine Light, that spiritual ecstasy, that superconscious Rapture, that direct realisation of Truth, that intuitive knowledge of Reality, that "at-one-ment" of man with God, that identification of the Individual with the Universal, that flash of the concentrated essence of the Transcendent, that glare of the focussed radiance of the Absolute,—it shows all things in their true colour and all "Phenomena" in their naked "Reality", it swallows up all finite facts in itself, in its higher truth and unity, and shines in its own single, supreme Self—unanalysable and indivisible, omnipotent and omniscient, all-spreading and all-comprehending, all-penetrating, and yet all transcending.

"Maya" is, so to speak, annihilated in the dazzle of "Brahma"; "Phenomena" are submerged in the Reality of "neumena"; the "visible is lost in the "Invisible"; the "sensible" world is dissolved in the "supra-sensible."

Just as Intellect is a higher faculty than the senses, similarly "Transport" is a higher faculty, than the Intellect. (In fact, as already stated, "Transport" is not a faculty in the general acceptation of the term, but for lack of any better expression, let us call it by this name.) Just as in the waking state we have a higher sort of consciousness than that of sleep; similarly in Spiritual transport, we have a higher kind of consciousness than that of waking. Just as there is no proof of light, colours, and forms for those who are born blind, but people with eyes see them, and want no proof; similarly there is no proof of Spiritual knowledge for the world at large, but saints themselves, who experience the transport and ecstasy, need no proof. Just

as blind men cannot understand the difference in colours except by getting their eyes opened, similarly laymen cannot understand spiritual knowledge except by awakening their faculty of transport. Just as the Sun exists although bats and owls cannot see it, similarly Transport does exist although we may not know it.

We are spiritually ignorant and blind. By denying spiritual knowledge, the faculty of transport and the subtle spiritual regions, we only betray our own ignorance and folly. If we do not know of a thing, we should not jump to the conclusion that the thing does not exist. Our ignorance cannot serve as a proof for its non-existence. Even if we have never experienced a transport we have no right to say that it is an impossibilty. At best we can say that we do not know. We can take up a neutral position. But to deny it outright would be extreme presumption on our part, for it would imply that we know every thing in the universe. We can

never know all things of the universe at the level of the intellect, and consequently we should never hasten to deny the existence of a thing.

What shall we say to a blind man, if he tries to prove by reason and argument that light and colours do not exist? We shall merely laugh at his blindness and ignorance, and if we are sympathetic, we might try to cure his eyesight and show him light and colours. Similarly what would a saint think of us, if we tried to prove to him that there was no faculty of transport and no transcendent knowledge? He would simply laugh at us, for "transport" is a greater reality for him than anything else. And because saints are tender-hearted, they take pity on us, and invite us to get our faculty of transport awakened; but blind as we are, we go on telling them obstinately that there is no such thing as transport. Transport exists, and is its own proof.

Just as a man who gets up from sleep

needs no proof to know that the waking condition is different from sleep, and that it is a state of superior consciousness; similarly the man who experiences a Spiritual transport knows, as a fact of immediate consciousness, that the state of transport is different from ordinary waking state, and that spiritual consciousness is of a higher order than waking consciousness.

One who feels pain needs no proof of its existence; the feeling itself is its proof. One who tastes delicious dishes requires no proof of their delicious taste; the experience of that taste is the best proof of its existence and sweetness. Similarly, but *with a greater certainty*, the man who experiences a transport knows, as an immediate fact of consciousness, that transport is a reality, which leads him to higher subtler spheres of extreme bliss and beatitude.

قوم گفتند اے گروہِ مدعی ٭ کو گواہِ علم و طبِ نافعی

(People say, O ye! who claim to pos-

sess transcendent knowledge, have ye any witness of your superhuman science and curative skill ?,—Rumi

And the saints make answer :—

تو بگوئی آفتابا کو گواہ ۞ گویدت اے کور از حق دیدہ خواہ

(Questionest thou, "Who the witness of the Sun is," and replieth he :—" O thou blind man, pray thou to God for sight."—) Rumi.

(*c*) *Transport Open to all.* Now, this Spiritual faculty of Transport is present in all human beings but they are not aware of it, because it is in a latent or dormant condition. It is sleeping, so to speak.

भीखा भूखा कोइ नहीं,
सब की गठड़ी लाल।
गांठ खोल नहीं जानते,
इस बिधि भये कंगाल॥

[None is poor, O Bhikha ; every one hath got rubies in his bundle. But how to open the knot he doth not know, and therefore is he a pauper.]

Saints have opened the knot and obtained the rubies of transcendent Truths. They are poor no longer. Their Spiritual power has been aroused, their inner eye has been opened and they see Reality face to face or rather we should say that those who have awakened this sleeping faculty of the soul are called saints ; for this faculty or capacity is there in every man, and can be awakened by him through proper training.

(*d*) ***Spiritual Realisation.*** Thus Spiritual realisation is not an intellectual understanding ; it is a transcendent experience which to be known must be had practically. " In order to understand Sufism thoroughly " says Al Ghazzali, " one must combine theory with practice. The last stage in Sufism cannot be reached by mere instruction ; but only by transport, ecstasy, and the transformation of the moral being." And if Sufism, which is said to be a lower kind of Spirituality, requires practice and transformation of one's moral being, what

shall we say of the higher kinds, which go above the sphere of morality, which transport the devotee beyond good and evil into realms of absolute Truth and transcendent Reality?

बिन देखे बिन अर्स पर्स के नाम लिये क्या होय।
धन के कहे धनी जे होवे निर्धन रहे न कोय॥

[What doth it avail thee if thou utterest His name, but hast seen Him not, nor hast thou touched Him? If mere talk of wealth could make men rich, then none would remain poor.]

लिखा लिखी की है नही देखा देखी की बात॥

[It is not a matter of writing and reading, but of actual seeing.]

ਗੱਲੀਂ ਜੋਗ ਨ ਹੋਈ॥

["Yoga" cannot be had by talking or theory.]

We cannot form an accurate idea of Spiritual knowledge except by following the Spiritual path. It is not only a knowing but essentially a seeing—seeing com-

pletely, thoroughly, and intimately—on a plane, above the level of the intellect and beyond the perception of the senses. Nay, it is not even a seeing; it is a "becoming",—it is to become the very Truth that we want to know, it is to enter with our soul the transcendent ultimate Reality as it is in its essence and being, and it is to know that supreme Reality by becoming one with that Reality ourselves.

2. Spiritual Knowledge.

(*a*) *Subtle Perception.* Now, to look at the thing from another point of view, let us see how we get knowledge in this world. Leaving aside ***a priori*** principles, we acquire knowledge in two ways :—

1. *Firstly*, by immediate experience, which contains its truth in itself, and needs no arguments or outside authority to prove it. Such is sensation or perception.

2. *Secondly*, by inference from our knowledge of immediate experience.

Now, it is obvious that knowledge got by immediate experience is more reliable than that which is inferred from it. But this more reliable knowledge is also of several kinds. We can have such immediate experience at different stages or levels of consciousness, *viz.*

(1) in dreams,
(2) in waking condition,
(3) at a still higher level or plane of consciousness, above and beyond the Intellect.

It is evident that the higher the level of consciousness where immediate experience is had, the better, more certain, and clearer shall be the knowledge gained.

Spiritual knowledge may thus crudely be called perception on subtler, spiritual planes by subtler, spiritual faculties of the soul. Just as the human soul experiences Phenomena, and perceives material things, in the physical world by means of physical organs; similarly on higher, subtler, spiritual planes the soul has transcendent

experiences by means of its subtler spiritual organs or faculties , if we may put it so.

(*b*) ***Sheaths or Covers on the Soul.*** The whole creation is not only of one kind, *viz*., physical ; there are many other kinds of subtle worlds also, different from this material world, *viz*., astral, causal, and spiritual, although we know only the physical universe. Similarly we have not only one kind of body, *i. e*., physical ; we have other subtle bodies also, which are different from this physical frame, such as astral and causal, although we are conscious only of the gross physical body.

خویشتن را تو ز آب و گل بشناس ٭ کہ تو زیں آب و گلِ قبا داری

(Know thou thyself distinct from the material elements of thy body, for these are merely thy cloak.)

Spiritualists tell us that these bodies are only covers on the soul, which hide its Light and conceal its Bliss. We have to remove all these covers before we can

attain to those supra-spiritual realms, which are the highest planes of consciousness, and wherefrom we are told the primeval creative "Impulse" "originates and proceeds."

3. Transport is Beyond Psychology.

Psychologists usually include Spiritual experience in their Psychology, but it is not a Psychological phenomenon in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a supernatural state of transcendent consciousness, it is a superhuman experience of absolute Reality.

(a) *Transcendent Experience.* In the first place psychology deals with human consciousness. Spirituality leads us into superhuman consciousness. Spiritual insight differs from waking condition not only in degree but also in kind. Transport opens a new kind of creation to our eyes. It is not the physical eye that sees things of transport; it is the internal spiritual transcendent eye of the soul which views

naked Reality in a moment of universal consciousness. Psychology concerns itself with this world and phenomena; spiritual transport takes us into other subtler, spiritual worlds, and gives us a transcendent knowledge of Noumena or Reality. Psychology is confined to consciousness at the physical and mental level; transport pierces the veil of gross matter, and reveals astral, causal, and subtler spiritual planes in a flash of transcendent light. Psychology works at the level of the Intellect; transport shuts up all thinking and reasoning in order to open the innermost recesses of the soul, and see Absolute Reality face to face. It transcends all limitations of Reason and Intellect.

How can those laws, which govern finite human consciousness, be applied to superhuman and transcendent intuition of the saint? How can rules of the common man be applied to the superman? Just as mechanical laws cannot explain mesmeric and spiritualistic phenomena or

miracles, similarly, but with a greater force, the principles of psychology cannot explain spiritual transport. With all the advance that it has made in recent years, psychology cannot give a satisfactory account even of "dream" and "hallucination". And if it cannot explain even such low states of consciousness merely because these do not fall within the "norm", *i. e.*, the waking state, how can this science presume to explain states of super and ultra super-consciousness, which are far far superior to and altogether different from waking?

(*b*) *Beyond the Duality of Subject and Object.* Secondly spiritual transport is beyond the fundamental duality of psychology. Psychology assumes at least two entities for any knowledge to be possible at all, *viz.*, the subject and the object. In ordinary consciousness there can be no knowledge, unless there is a distinct subject and a distinct object. But spiritual knowledge knows no duality; it shines in its own one-

ness. Transport transcends the psychological limitation of the duality of subject and object. In spiritual rapture the subject knowing and the object known are not two, but become one. In psychological knowledge one entity or being perceives another thing or being; the object here is always "another". In spiritual transport, we know and enter Reality; the object here does not remain "another", but becomes indentical with the subject. We know the ultimate Reality by becoming that Reality ourselves. In spiritual knowledge oneness reigns supreme; there is no scope for "another". The "another" of psychology is absorbed, comprehended and transcended in the unanalysable unity of spiritual insight. The ultimate Reality is One, and when we enter the realm of transport, we lose our own separate existence in the Oneness of that Absolute Reality.

Further Psychological consciousness differentiates between various things, it

sees "manyness", it is analytical, so to speak; Spiritual transport unites different finite bits of experience into a real whole, it reveals true "Oneness", it is thus synthetical. But this synthesis is not intellectual, but transcendent and spiritual. Psychology views only phenomena, and deals with various fragments of experience; transport looks at the whole of Reality, and grasps the essence of its oneness in a moment of eternal consciousness. To give a crude simile, we may say that psychological consciousness deals with the various switches of electric installation, which move fans, light up lamps and do other work; but Spiritual transport controls the machinery that works the dynamo. Psychology is confined to Appearance to the world as it appears to us, *i. e.*, to bits of finite Phenomena; Spiritual transport comprehends the whole of Reality in one pulse of transcendent consciousness.

(c) *Saints Themselves are the Best*

Judges of this question. Lastly let us consider as to who should decide whether spiritual transport is or is not a psychological phenomenon. Obviously not that man, who has experience of only one of these. Those, who have never experienced a transport, are not in a position to compare the two. That man who has experienced both, *i.e.*, psychological phenomena as well as spiritual transport, is the right person to judge. He knows both, and he can compare. Such a right judge is the saint himself; for he lives, not only on the physical plane, but also on higher subtler planes. He knows what psychological phenomena are and he has also experienced spiritual transport. Hence spiritual people alone have a right to say whether or not their transport is a psychological phenomenon in the general acceptation of the term. We are not in a position to speak on the matter; for we see only one side. Our experiences are limited to Psychological phenomena only. We have never had a transport. We

know nothing of spiritual knowledge. How can we then pass judgment on it? How can we speak of a thing we know nothing about? How can we compare it with other things? It betrays our utter ignorance and extreme folly when we presume to gauge the infinitude of spiritual transport with the foot-rule of our Psychology.

Once there was a tortoise living in a well, where another tortoise came from the sea. The tortoise of the well questioned the other as to the extent and size of his sea. The other replied that it was very vast. The first tortoise just made a leap and enquired if the sea was so big, and got the reply that it was much bigger. He made another leap and enquired again, and then another jump, and so on, till he completed the whole circuit of the well; but was invariably given the same answer. The poor tortoise of the well was at his wit's ends to understand this, for he could not imagine any water to be bigger than

his well. At last he said to the other tortoise: "There is no such thing as the sea. You are telling a lie, or you are under a delusion." The tortoise of the sea simply laughed at the folly and the narrow mental vision of his companion, and kept quiet; for he could not prove his point to such an obstinate and blind fellow.

Similarly we cannot think of spiritual transport as anything beyond our Psychological phenomena. We are tortoises of the well; how can we understand the tortoises of the sea?

Let them say whatever they like; but we must disbelieve them, and include their limitless ocean of Spiritual transport in our small well of the intellect. We must persist that spiritual knowledge is psychological phenomena, how-so-ever strongly and clearly they may tell us that it is not. We then conclude that these trotters of the spiritual Path must be in a delusion, for they talk of things which we have not experienced, and which conse-

quently cannot exist. This is indeed strange logic that tells us to infer the non-existence of a thing from our ignorance of it. We are not only ignorant of spiritual transport, but we are also ignorant of our own ignorance. "Our general knowledge is our general ignorance, and an ignorance, unfortunately, unconscious of itself."

If an illiterate man sits in judgment upon Shakespeare and his art, we shall consider him a great fool and attach no importance to his words ; similarly, if those people, who have never experienced a transport and consequently know nothing of it, pass their verdict on spiritual knowledge, their views are not worthy of notice. Only a thorough student of Shakespeare can give us a correct criticism of him ; only an adept in spirituality can tell us the ins and outs of spiritual transport, only he can say if his transport is a psychological phenomenon or otherwise. And as all saints with one accord assert that spiritual transport is not a

psychological phenomenon, we shall have to admit that it is not. Spiritual knowledge and ecstatic transport should never be confused with mental processes. Let it be made quite clear, however, that what is beyond Psychology is the actual state of spiritual transport, not any thinking or talking of it.

4. Not Blind Emotion.

Nor is spiritual insight mere blind emotion or feeling; for feeling is guided sublimated, elevated and transformed here by transcendent insight. Religion lays great stress on feeling but religion is still at the mercy of the Intellect. Spirituality thus begins where religion ends; for spiritual knowledge opens where thinking and reasoning close.

Nor is it Nothingness. People say that if spiritual intuition is a suspension of all thinking, then it must be nothing, for absence of thought means a vacant mind, a non-entity. But as already stated, this

reasoning is fallacious. Spiritual knowledge is not nothing ; it is a greater something than all Thought. Just as we stop our physical senses from doing their work, and we think ; similarly in transport we stop our thinking processes also, and know through a transcendent faculty of the soul.

If a man shuts his eyes, that does not necessarily mean that he has no consciousness, or possesses no knowledge. He may be thinking on a great and serious problem. His external eyes may be shut, but his mental eyes may be open, and he may be absorbed in serious meditation. Similarly if we suspend our thinking along with the shutting of external sense-organs, it does not follow that we have no consciousness or knowledge. We may be having transcendent experience. Our soul might be awake, and busy in more serious work than it can do at the intellectual level.

5. Spiritual Trance.

When ordinary people sleep, they go to a state of lower consciousness, *viz.*, dream or sound sleep; but when saints sleep they go to a state of higher consciousness, *viz.*, the transcendent consciousness of astral, causal, spiritual, or supra-spiritual planes. Their physical body sleeps, their intellect and mental faculties also sleep; but their soul awakes, and sees, and knows—that seeing and knowing being super-conscious and transcendent.

या निशा सर्वं भूतानां तस्यां जागर्तिं संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रन्ति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुने : ॥

("That which is the night of all beings, in that the disciplined man wakes; when other beings are waking, then is it night for the wakeful saint.")

—Bhagwad Gita. II. 69.

گفت پیغمبر که خسپد جسم من نه که خسپد جان من اندر زمن

("Sleepeth my body," saith the Pro-

phet, "but sleepeth not my soul within me.")

Maulvi Rum.

ਓਇ ਜਾਗਤ ਰਹਹਿ ਨ ਸੂਤੇ ਦੀਸਹਿ ॥

They (saints) remain wakeful and are never seen sleeping).

Guru Granth Sahib.

"The sage is awake to things over which the ordinary man sleeps, and the eyes of the sage are open to truths shut out from the common vision, while that which is real for the masses is illusion for the sage." Saints live in the Light of Truth and Reality; worldly people grope in the darkness of Delusion and Phenomena.

Direct Realisation not Imagination. As already said, Spiritual knowledge is a direct realisation of Truth ; it is not mere imagination, for this too works at the level of the intellect. Moreover imagination cannot yield us entirely new knowledge ; it can only give us new combinations of various parts of our old experience. Imagination performs a twofold function—

analysis and synthesis. First of all it analyses or breaks up old experience into small bits, and then it combines or synthesises these bits in novel ways. Thus although imagination is creative in as much as the new thing created by it is taken as a whole, entirely new, yet it is not really creative if we consider the different parts of that new thing. Every part of it is already known and old. Imaginatian can never give us a thing which is new in every part of it. But Spiritual transport takes us into a different world altogether, and affords us knowledge of things which are different from our daily experience, not only as a whole but also on each part, and not only in degree but essentially in kind,

Further, a coinage of our brain, or a production of our imagination cannot bring about a vital change in our very being or essence as men. Spirituality, on the other hand, transforms us into purely spiritual and super-consciously blissful

entities, for it is true knowledge of Absolute Reality. That dawning of transcendent Light, that rapture of spiritual ecstasy bridges over the wide gulf between the finite and the Infinite ; it is a touch of heavenly alchemy that changes the base individual into the Divine Universal.

ਲਾਲੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਾਲ ਦੀ, ਜਿਤ ਦੇੱਖਾਂ ਤਿਤ ਲਾਲ ।
ਲਾਲੀ ਦੇਖਨ ਮੈਂ ਚਲੀ, ਹੋ ਗਈ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਲਾਲ ॥

(Whichever way the eye turneth, it beholdeth the refulgent Glory of my beloved Lord. To see that Divine Radiance, did I go, and was even myself dyed in that glory.)

Whoever goes into transcendent regions to behold the glory of God, himself becomes that Glory and that God. This is the magical charm of that Glory, it transforms mortals into divine beings.

6. Recapitulation.

Thus we see that spiritual insight is

indefinable, and transcendent; it is beyond the reach of Intellect, and the senses. It cannot be expressed in language; it cannot be conveyed through ideas. It is a practical experience in a state of heavenly ecstasy; it is a superconscious intuition in a flight of spiritual transport.

In addition to the physical universe, there are other kinds of creation, also, such as astral, causal, and spiritual. Similarly man has two other bodies besides the physical, viz, astral and causal, which he must get out of, to shine as his real self, the spirit. Spiritual knowledge may be described as perception in higher, subtler, spiritual worlds by means of subtler bodies, or the naked soul.

Every human being is capable of experiencing spiritual transport. This capacity or faculty is present in all men, although in most it remains in a latent or dormant condition all their life.

Spirituality is beyond the sphere of Psychology, because it transcends the

fundamental duality of subject and object. Here the subject knowing and the object known are not two distinct entities but become one; the Individual knows the Universal by becoming identical with the Universal himslf.

Nor is spirituality mere blind emotion; for feeling here is sublimated and guided by transcendent Light of transport. Nor is it nothingness. Our ignorance of its existence cannot serve as a proof against its reality. Spiritual transport and realisation remain a solid fact, whether we believe in them or not.

Spiritual transport is a direct realisation of God. It is not imagination, for imagination is only an analytico-synthetic process of the mind. Spiritual insight, on the other hand, is no process at all; it is a direct flash of spiritual light that reveals to us the true essence of all Being and Existence.

CHAPTER V.

Conclusion of Part I.

CHAPTER V.

WE have seen that there are certain problems of vital importance which arise with the very dawn of consciousness, and demand a solution; that Philosophy, Religion, and Spirituality offer their various solutions; and that it is within the scope of Spirituality alone to deal with these fundamental problems. They involve questions about transcendent truths, and Spirituality alone can handle transcendent entities.

1. Spirituality and Philosophy.

It is a wonder that Philosophers include Spirituality (which they call Mysticism) among philosophical theories. As has been pointed out already, Spirituality is not a theory at all; it is outside the pale of Philosophy. Philosophy deals with theories; while Spirituality deals, not with theories of Reality, but with Reality itself. The saints realize and see face

to face with the eye of the soul, and enter by their spiritual being, and attain their 'at-one-ment' with that Absolute and ultimate Reality, of which the various Philosophical theories are but attempted descriptions or analyses. Philosophy deals with theories and its organ is 'Intellect'; Spirituality deals with Reality and its organ is 'Transport'. One is ordinary knowledge, the other is a transcendent awakening; one is an intellectual knowing, the other is a spiritual becoming. In the light of the certain, absolute and transcendent knowledge of the saint, Philosophical theories are sheer guesswork. They are merely possible explanations or descriptions of Reality; but Reality is a thing apart.

اسم خواندی رو مسمیٰ را بجو ٭ مہ ببالا دان نہ اندر آب جو

(Thou hast read the name; O, go and seek thou the Being of that name. Know thou the moon in the sky, O, look not thou for it in water.) —Maulvi Rum.

There you have its reflection only.

बिन देखे बिन अर्स पर्स के नाम लिये क्या होय।
धन के कहे धनी जे होवे निर्धन रहे न कोय॥

(What doth it avail thee, if thou utterest His name, but hast seen Him not, nor hast thou touched Him? If mere talk of wealth could make men rich, then none would remain poor.)

To know Hygiene, to know all the principles which are necessary for preserving health, *i. e.*, to know the theory of health, is different from being healthy. It is one thing to know Ethics and the theory of the moral good, and another to be really good. To talk of riches is quite distinct from actually possessing wealth. This is the distinction between Philosophy and Spirituality. They are poles asunder. One theorizes at the level of the Intellect, the other knows at the plane of the Spirit; one is at best the name of a description of a thing, the other is the thing itself.

یک نظر دو گز ہمے بیند ز راہ ٭ یک نظر دو کون دید و روئے شاہ
درمیانِ ایں دو فرق بے شمار ٭ سرمۂ جو کہ وانہ اعلم بالاسرار

(One sight sees only two yards, way ahead, and one sight beholdeth both the worlds and the Almighty. How vast is the difference between these two ! O, seek thou that collyrium which openeth to thee the hidden mysteries of God). —Maulvi Rum.

The eye of intellect can see only the two yards of phenomena ; but the inner transcendent eye of transport views the whole of infinite Reality in one eternal moment of universal consciousness. Philosophy gropes in the dark for definitions and descriptions ; but "with 'saints' says Al Ghazzali, "repose and movement, exterior and interior, are illumined with the light which proceeds from the central Radiance of Inspiration" and things revealed to them during their spiritual flights are "impossible to recount." By means of the spiritual practice "they rise

by degrees to heights which human language cannot reach, which one cannot even indicate without falling into great and inevitable errors. He, who does not arrive at the intuition of these truths by means of ecstasy, knows only the name of inspiration."

Generally when we take up the writings of a great man of the past, then perhaps under the wide-spreading influence of the theory of Evolution, we try to trace the development of his ideas from his predecessors, and of their ideas from their predecessors and so on. We study the thing from what is sometimes called the historical standpoint. But spiritual knowledge does not consist of ideas and therefore it does not develop from one man to another; it simply dawns in the bosom of an individual, and is personal. Every saint has his own individual experiences, and without that personal transcendent awakening, spiritual knowledge is impossible. That knowledge

cannot be conveyed through ideas, because it cannot be put into ideas. It is altogether a private, personal transcendent realisation.

Moreover, saints may or may not be poets. A saint is essentially and in the first place a saint; he may also happen to be a poet. Perhaps generally he becomes a poet, because poetry yields to him the best means available for giving vent to his feelings and experiences. But he does not use exaggeration or hyperbole; he speaks out the Truth as best he can; he actually and really means all that he utters; he tries to put what he experiences in his spiritual raptures into the most appropriate words that he can find. We should not take his statements to be hyperbole, nor attach too much importance to his linguistic style. We should rather try to grasp his meanings. He tells us only what he sees with his own inner eye, and hears with his own inner ear.

ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਸੁਨਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ ।
ਸੋ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਜੋ ਪੇਖਹਿ ਆਖੀ ॥

(O, listen thou to the truc testimony of 'saints', for they utter what theh behold).

—Guru Granth Sahib.

ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈਂ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ।
ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

As cometh to me the 'word' of the Lord, so do I speak to thee, O Lalo !)

—Guru Nanak.

(*a*) *Spirituality yields True Knowledge.* Spiritual insight is free from those defects, which we find clinging to intellectual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge does not change; it is ever constant, the same at all times and for all men. It alone deserves the name of knowledge, for it is sure and certain. There is no scope for doubt in it. Further it is effective in action; it guides and controls our whole life; it becomes a part of our being.

Whatever we know through spiritual transport, we must abide by. It has in it the power to make us act according to its dictates.

Spirituality cures us of all spiritual ailments, and liberates us from all subtle evils. When light dawns, darkness is gone; when knowledge appears, ignorance vanishes; when bliss comes, pain fumes away. Spiritual enlightenment removes all our weaknesses, and makes us spiritually strong. The flood of spiritual love washes away all our dirt and filth; the storm of spiritual bliss drives away all our doubt and suspicion; the sun of spiritual knowledge dissipates all our delusion and darkness; and nothing is left but the naked truth beaming in its own radiance, the absolute Reality glowing in its own refulgence.

چون به بیند نورِ حق ایمن شود ٭ ز اضطراباتِ شک او میاکن شود

(As he heholdeth the Light of Truth,

therefore hath he Peace and deliverance from the pangs of doubt.) —Rumi.

(*b*). *Spirituality Opens our inner Eye.* Spirituality does not dictate like Philosophy or Religion; it only opens our inner eye so that we may see by ourselves; it only gives us "Light" by which we may perceive things in their true colour; it only awakens our transcendent power of perceiving the deep reality of things, and then leaves us to form our own judgment by a first-hand knowledge.

आप आप को आप पछानो । कहा और का नेक न मानो ।।

(Know thou thyself by thyself; believe not at all what others say.)

—Radha Swami Sahib.

It is our own, individual, personal experience of spiritnal transport that brings us certain and reliable knowledge. It is seeing with our own inner eyes, and hearing with our own inner ears.

जब देखें हम अपने नैना । तब मानें सतगुरु के बैनां ॥

(When with my own eyes do I behold,

then shall I accept what Sat Guru saith.)

—Tulsi Sahib.

ਜਬ ਤਕ ਨ ਦੇਖੂੰ ਅਪਨੀ ਨੈਨੀ ।
ਤਬ ਤਕ ਨ ਪਤੀਜੂੰ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬੈਨੀ ।

(Until with my own eyes do I see, the word of the Guru satisfieth me not.)

In spiritual matters we are not required to take things for granted; or remain content with mere theoretical understanding. An intellectual grasp of the salient points may help us in doing the spiritual practice properly and successfully; but the real object of all spiritual training is to have practical realisation of transcendent Truth, and a first hand experience of subtle entities.

2. Dying while Living.

The Spiritual Path teaches us how to cross the gate of Death even during our Lifetime, and see for ourselves all that is hidden beyond. It is quite true that no ordinary man comes back after death to give us

news of the next world; but saints die and come back to life every day. With their souls, they can freely roam about in all subtle planes. Thus they can tell us about the other world, and help us at our death in our journey to that region. If we also manage to take our soul into the subtler planes during our life-time, we can also see the other world before our death. This is what spiritual practice does for us: it teaches us how to die and go into the other world before our final death, see transcendent truths, unveil hidden mysteries and then come back into the physical body.

ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਮਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਜੀਵਾਂ ।
ਗੁਰੁ ਐਸੀ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਬਤਾਈ ਹੈ ॥

(Every day do I die, and every day do I come back to life: such is the method that my Guru hath taught me.)

Guru Granth Sahib.

جاں بہ کندی و اندر پردۂ ⁂ زانکہ مردن اصل بد ناوردۂ

(Death agony did'st thou suffer in

meditation, but still thou art in veil ; inasmuch as true death – for true meditation consisteth in dying while living—thou did'st not experience).—Maulvi Rum.

We cannot worship God in the true sense until by crossing the threshold of Death, we reach His durbar and see Him face to face. By means of spiritual transport we come to know whither we are going, and what arrangements we can make for our final journey.

ਮੋਇਆ ਜਿਤ ਘਰ ਜਾਈਐ, ਤਿਤ ਜੀਵੰਦਿਆਂ ਮਰ ਮਾਰਿ ।

[Where man goeth after death, O die thou into that realm while living]—Guru Granth Sahib.

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਵਤਿਆਂ ਮਰ ਰਹੀਐ । ਐਸਾ ਜੋਗ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥

(Such a spiritual practice follow thou, O Nanak, that diest thou even while living.)

मरिये तो मर जाइये , छूट पड़ै संसार ।
ऐसा मरना को मरे दिन में सौ सौ बार ॥

(If die we must, then let us die, and get rid of this world. But such a death

who doth die—hundreds of times in a day ?)

This is spiritual dying, and saints can go into subtler worlds hundreds of times during the day.

3. Spirituality and Religion.

But what does Religion do for us ? It gives us only promises of Heaven and hopes of Salvation; while spirituality takes us into the very heart of Life and Freedom. Religion offers us but a sham consolation ; spirituality gives us true realisation. Religion is more or less a concern of this world ; spiritual transport takes us to the next world and opens to our spiritual vision those hidden secrets of the essence of Being, which are beyond both salvation and bondage, beyond all dualities and relativities, and above all pairs of opposites.

In fact religions of to-day lay stress on moral and social reformation rather than on spiritual enlightenment ; they do

not reveal God to us, nor impart knowledge of transcendent entities.

Religions depend on books and writings, but books do not contain God. They only attempt to give us an idea of Him. Just as a Bank Pass Book does not contain money, but merely an account of it; just as a book of medicine does not contain medicines, but merely prescriptions for their use; just as the Engineer's book does not contain the material—bricks, wood, iron etc.—but only a description of them; similarly God and other transcendent entities are not in books. These contain merely descriptions of spiritual transports, and accounts of transcendent knowledge. Religions can impart us at best an intellectual understanding of their own version of Reality; but Reality is a thing apart. For Reality or God Himself we should go to Saints, who give us not only the best theory of Reality, but pre-eminently God, or transcendent Reality itself. Religion may satisfy those who depend on sheer faith;

but for all true seekers, for all who desire true enlightenment and true happiness, for all who want to know absolute Truth and transcendent Reality, spirituality is indispensable.

علم جوئی از کُتب ہائے فسوس ؛ ذوق جوئی تو ز حلوائے سبوس

(Seekest thou knowledge in books, oh alas ! findest thou relish in a pudding of chaff).—Maulvi Rum.

ز کُنج مدرسہ حافظ مجوی گوہر عشق ؛ قدم بروں نہ اگر میل جستجو داری

(In a school seek not thou the Pearl of Love, O Hafiz ; step thou out, if its desire dost thou cherish)

God is not in books ; He is with saints. If we are anxious to find Him, we should seek the company of those who have realised Him themselves, instead of wasting all our time in the study of books.

گفت پیغمبر کہ حق فرمودہ است ۔ من نگنجم ہیچ در بالا و پست

در دلِ مومن بگنجم این عجب ۔ گر مرا خواہی ازاں دل طلب

(The prophet said, 'God saith to me —'I do not live high or low at all.........It is wonderful, I live in the heart of the 'devotee'; if thou desirest Me then seek Me from his heart.)

مسجدے ہست اندرونِ اولیا ۔ سجدہ گاہِ جملہ ہست آنجا خدا

(The mosque is inside the saints and there resideth God for the homage of all.)

When we want to learn English, we go to those who know this language themselves. An illiterate person cannot teach us. To learn the art of painting, we go to painters and not to carpenters; the latter can teach us only carpentry. Hence if we want to know God and realise the ultimate truths of life, we should go, not to those people who are themselves

ignorant and blind; but to those whose internal eyes are open and who see, who can look through Phenomena or 'Maya' into the transcendent Reality beyond. For God we should go to saints, for they know Him; they know the ins and outs of the subtle and complicated path of spiritual realisation, and are well acquainted with the intricacies of transcendent flights. Our preachers and lecturers are themselves spiritually in the dark; how can they lead others on the right path? They have no light themselves; what light will they show us?

अविधायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः, स्वयं धीराः पणिडतम्मन्यमानाः।
जंघन्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढा, अन्धेनैव नीयमानाः यथान्धाः॥

(Engulfed in ignorance, but looking upon themselves as wise and learned, the fools go round the wheel of reincarnation after death like one blind man led by another.)—Mundak Upanishad.

It is only the man with sight who can keep us on the right track, for he 'seeth'; it is only the saint who can take us to

God, for he 'knoweth'. Religion cannot take the place of spirituality; for it primarily teaches us how to deal with people here in this world. Spirituality on the other hand takes us to the other world to talk to supernatural beings there, and make a home for ourselves in the transcendent regions of the Absolute. Religion simply looks with gaping eyes at Phenomena, and wonders, and infers the existence and attributes of God by argumentation and reasoning. Spirituality transcends all reasoning, removes the veil of Phenomena, and reveals the true glory of God. Religion in vain taxes the frail Intellect for God and other transcendent entities which for ever remain beyond its grasp. Spirituality removes the cover of Intellect, and lays bare to the eye of the naked soul the very core of absolute Reality. Religion gropes blindly in the dark for truths which it cannot perceive; spirituality 'beholdeth' in the supremely radiant Light of ecstatic transport the very essence of pure Truth.

Religion guesses, surmises, conjectures, and reasons; Spirituality experiences, understands, grasps, and comprehends. Religion thinks and feels; Spirituality sees and knows; Religion lives on hope, Spirituality embraces realisation; Religion promises heaven, Spirituality takes us above heaven into the supra-spiritual realms of eternal bliss. Religion is an affair of this world; Spirituality transcends Time and Space, and comprehends all Being and Existence in one pulse of transcendent consciousness.

Saints have no religion; strictly speaking they are free people. They are bound by no forms or ceremonies, no rites or dogmas, no outward shows of religions. They are above the bondage of caste, creed, and nationality; they are citizens of the world—nay, they are denizens of the whole Universe; for through devotion and love, they have merged their individuality in the Universality of the Absolute One, and realised their 'at-one-ment' with the Eternal

Being.

مذہبِ عشق از ہمہ ملت جداست ؛ عاشقاں را مذہب و ملت خداست

(Different is the religion of Love from all creeds, for the creed and religion of Lovers is God Himself.)

4. Need of a Living Adept.

But to tread the path of spirituality we need a teacher. Without the master to lead us, we are liable to go astray, and lose our way in the intricate labyrinth of the subtle spiritual planes. Moreover, it is not possible to find access into the astral world without the transcendent help of an adept. So, a living guide is indispensable. By ourselves, we cannot move even an inch. We stagger and stumble ; we know not the way. But the saint guide goes into subtle spiritual planes himself, and can take others also into those transcendent regions. His own eyes are open and he sees, and he can open the spiritual

eyes of others as well.

वस्तु कहीं ढूंढे कहीं, केहि बिधि आवै हाथ।
कबीर तब ही पाइये, जब भेदी लीजै साथ॥

(The thing is somewhere else and seekest thou somewhere else; how can it come into thy hands? Only then can'st thou get it, O Kabir, when thou takest a 'Knowing person' with thee.)

भेदी लीना साथ कर, दीनी वस्तु लखाय।
कोट जनम का पन्थ था, पल में पहुंचा जाय॥

(A 'knowing' person did I take with me, and he showed me the thing; the journey of millions of lives was performed in no time.)—Kabir Sahib.

Saints lay stress on this point again and again. Without the guidance of an adept, we can never know God, even if we go on trying for centuries; it is the saint adept who opens our inner eye of transport, and shows us God in this very life.

For achieving anything whatsoever two things are essential,—movement and right direction. If we are not on the

right path, then the more we go the farther may we be from our ideal. Hence it is essential that we first make sure of the path we take. And if we go with an expert, we shall be safe under his guidance. He will take us to our destination quickly and comfortably. The teacher is a necessity in every profession and department, in every trade and art, but he is most essential in spiritual practices.

مر ترا عقلے ست جزوے در نہاں ، کامل العقلے بجو اندر جہاں
جزوِ تو از کل او کلی شود ، عقلِ کل بر نفس چون غلی شود

(Since imperfect and hidden is thy 'sense', therefore seek thou in this world one with perfect 'sense'; so that thy partial 'sense' may become complete through his perfection, and overcome thy passions.) —Maulvi Rumi.

Our sense is liable to err, but the wisdom of the saint is faultless, and immaculate, and he alone can guide us in the saint school of transcendent wisdom. He is that guide

and friend who always remains with us. It is not his body which is Guru. Guru is the inner spirit which remains with us for our help on all spiritual planes, and which is in being and essence one with God. But it manifests itself on this physical plane in the form of a man. As we are at present human beings, we stand in need of a human Guru. Just as for our education we need a contemporary teacher and for our ailments we need a living doctor, so do we need a living, contemporary saint for our spiritual training. It matters not whether he is a Hindu or a Mohammedan, a Christian or a Jew, a Sikh or a Parsi. Let him belong to any creed or caste or religion, for that is only a social necessity ; but if his inner eyes are open, if he has awakened transport and realized God, he will serve the purpose.

مرد حجی ہمرہی حاجی طلب ؛ خواہ ہندو و خواہ ترک و خواہ عرب

(Whoever goeth on a pilgrimage

needeth a pilgrim for the way, be he a Hindu, a Turk, or an Arab.)—Maulvi Rum.

(*a*) *Saints are Our Friends even after Our Death.* Spirituality is the path of love and devotion ; only through love can we get over our egoism and behold the light of Truth. And saints alone are worthy of love ; they are our true friends, not only here, but more fundamentally in the astral, causal, subtler and spiritual planes. They receive us in the astral plane at the time of our death, and see us safe at the highest spiritual stage. Saints alone are our real friends ; for worldly friends desert us even in this life, but saints leave us not even after our death.

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਚੜਿਆਂ ਸਿਉ ਤੋੜ, ਢੂੰਡ ਸਜਨ ਸੰਤ ਪੱਕਿਆਂ ।
ਉਹਿ ਜੀਵੰਦੇ ਵਿਛੁੜੈਂ ਉਇ ਮੋਇਆਂ ਨ ਜਾਹੀਂ ਛੋੜ ॥

(Break thou off with the false friends of this world, O Nanak and find out thou a saint who will be thy true friend. The former part with thee in life, but the latter deserteth thee not even at thy death.)

This is what we can do against Death. We can take refuge with saints, who alone can save us from the agonies of Death and the tortures of Hell, and can protect us from all dangers here and hereafter.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿਉ ਕਰ ਦੋਸਤੀ, ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਉ ਲਾਇ ਚਿਤੁ।
ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਦੁਖ ਕੱਟੀਏ, ਤਾਂ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੈ ਮਿਤੁ ॥

(Make thou friends with 'Gurmukh', and be devoted to 'Satguru'; thus cut thou asunder the chain of birth and death, and then shalt thou attain eternal bliss, O friend.) —Guru Granth Sahib.

5. Conclusion.

(*a*) *Spirituality is a pressing Need.* Thus we see that spirituality is the most vital concern of life. To attain to the transcendent in-sight of the saint and realise the deep essence of things; to penetrate phenomena and get at the profound secret of the world in the innermost recesses of the Absolute; to fly up to Olympian heights in the bosom of the

Transcendent, and merge the drop of our individual existence in the limitless ocean of The Supreme Being; to fathom the depth of all Truth and Reality by the plumbline of the pure soul in a state of super-conscious ecstasy; to shake off all gross and subtle covers from over the Spirit and let it shine in its own genuine and beaming lustre; to see with the inner eye, hear with the inner ear, be in the being of Absolute Life, and live in the Light of Eternal Existence, this is what spirituality teaches us, and this is what we ought to do in this human life. If we do not want to grope in the dark like blind people, if we do not want to be driven irresistibly by the whirlwind of this unknown and awful material world, then we must open our inner eyes, we must look before we leap, we must see before we move, we must be awake before we act, we must know before we do.

Some men look upon youth as a time for enjoyment and indulgence in sensual

pleasures, and would postpone spiritual research to old age when the passions subside ; but they are sadly mistaken, for who can be sure of a long life ? Time and tide wait for no one ; men die in all ages and at all places. Not only do old people pass away, but children and young men also succumb to death.

ਨਹ ਬਾਰਕ ਨਹ ਜੋਬਨੈ ਨਹ ਬਿਰਧੀ ਕਛੁ ਬੰਧ ।
ਓਹ ਬੇਰਾ ਨਹ ਬੂਝੀਐ ਜਉ ਆਇ ਪਰੈ ਜਮ ਫੰਦ ॥

[Neither in childhood, nor in youth, nor in old age, no binding is there ; the Angel of death cometh unawares to snatch us away.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

Human life is short and uncertain ; we cannot afford to lose time, for we know not when we may be called away. A day passed lazily is not a day lived, but a day lost. When we are full of fresh vigour and youthful energy, when we have zest in action and keenness for work, we get blinded with passion and dissipate our time, money, and energy in sensual plea-

sures ; but when our hair turn grey and we have one leg in the grave, then we vainly long for that strength and vigour, that fervour and enthusiasm which is the sole possession and privilege of youth.

Bhartri Hari says:—

यावत् स्वस्थमिदं कलेवर गृहं, यावच्च दूरे जरा,
यावच्चेन्द्रियशक्तिरप्रतिहता, यावत् क्षयो नायुषः ।
आत्मश्रेयसि तावदेव विदुषा कार्यः प्रयत्नो महान्
प्रोद्दीप्तेभुवने तु कूपखननं प्रत्युद्यमः कीदृशः ॥

(As long as this body is healthy, as long as old age is far, as long as the strength of organs of sense is intact,as long as there is life and vitality, so long should a wise person make great efforts for his spiritual welfare. What is the use of trying to dig a well, when the house is on fire!)

The saint Kabir also says, to the same effect.

ਜਬ ਲਗ ਜਰਾ ਰੋਗ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ ।
ਜਬ ਲਗ ਕਾਲ ਗ੍ਰਸੀ ਨਹੀ ਕਾਇਆ ।

ਜਬ ਲਗ ਬਿਕਲ ਭਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਾਣੀ।
ਭਜ ਲੈ ਰੇ ਨਰ ਸਾਰੰਗ ਪਾਣੀ।

(As long as old age and disease have not appeared, as long as Death has not taken hold of the body, as long as the power of speech has not been impaired, so long do thou, O man ! meditate on God.)

We yearn for more time at our death, and would sacrifice all to get a few more seconds of life. Many and important are the things which we neglected when there was ample time, but which we would do now at all costs. But alas ! it is too late; the guard has given the whistle, and the train is already on the move. What can we do when our struggling soul is hanging between this world and the next; when our fate is balanced between life and death ? When we had time, we spent it recklessly in idle gossip and frivolous pursuits. But now the time is gone. 'We should not put off till tomorrow what we can do to-day'; for this postponement has disap-

pointed many a man. We go on delaying and hoping to do the thing 'tomorrow'; but that tomorrow never comes.

> 'Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and
> tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from
> day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded
> time;
> And all our yesterdays have
> lighted fools
> The way to dusty death".

Let us not wait for tomorrow, let us gird up our loins and seek access into spiritual transcendent realms to-day and now. Let us be men and not cowards.

برو در بیشهٔ معنی چو شیران ؛ چو گرگ و روبه و کفتار گشتی

[Go thou into the forests of Spirituality like a lion ; O, why hast thou turned a wolf or a hyena or a fox ?]—Shamas-i-Tabrez.

'Be strong, and quit thyself like a man'. —Bible.

(*b*). *True Renunciation.* It is said that to find God, we have to renounce the world. This, however, does not mean that we should give up all world-activity and run to jungles. The world is to be renounced, not with the body but with the mind. We have only to take out our mind from worldly thoughts and desires. Body is inert and dead ; it can do nothing by itself. If the mind be under our control, the body can rebel no longer. It is the mind that is to be trained. Our selfish desires are in the mind, and it is the mind that is polluted by them and that needs purification The body should not be tortured for nothing. When we succeed in turning out the desires and attachments of the world from our mind, then we have truly renounced the world, even if we be in the thick of worldly life. On the other hand sitting at the top of the Himalayas, we have not renounced the world, if worldly desires still cling to us. वनेऽपि दोषाः प्रभवन्ति रागिणाम् Evils overcome the worldly-

minded people in a forest even—Maha' Bharat.

(c) *Life is precious.* Saints who are in the know of things tell us that this life of ours may be compared to a foot-path on the side of a hill. On one side is the high peak where is situated our home, high and dry, far removed from all storms and tempests, beyond the reach of mists and clouds, shining in the charming and clear light of the spiritual Sun; on the other is a deep valley where the furious stream of anxiety rushes headlong to the sea of misery. The banks of the stream are sloping towards the water and are overgrown with prickly but beautiful looking shrubs. Now there are two courses before us;—either we climb up the hill with the help of an expert, reach our eternal Home of peace and bliss and share everlasting life; or tempted by the external beauty of the shrubs slip down, get our hands bruised by stones and our body pricked by thorns, and

finally fall down deep into the 'khad.' The winding way that goes up the hill and looks so rugged is the saintly path that seems so difficult and dreary at the start, but which ultimately takes us to our true Home in the bosom of God; but the apparently beautiful shrubs, which hide prickly thorns in them, are worldly attachments and sensual desires that entrap us in their meshes and, although pleasing in the beginning, gradually drag us down into misery and sorrow.

On the same foot-path with us, there are a few expert climbers (*i.e.*, saints) who reach the top in the twinkling of an eye, who invite us also to go with them, who look after us all the way, and see us safe in our true home at the peak. As the way to our true Home is the upper one, which though steep and zigzag, is still safe with an expert guide, let us come under his shelter and loving care, and entrust ourselves to his charge. Let us go Home now; we are already half way

up. Man is at the top of all physical creation; and God can be realized only in this life.

(*d*) ***Look Within.*** But he is within us, and should not be sought for anywhere outside.

> Man is the temple of God—Bible.
> The kingdom of God is within you.
> —Ibid.

ਕਾਂਇਆਂ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਵਸੈ ਅਲਖ ਨ ਲਖਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥

(Within the body doth He reside, invisible, being transcendent.)

—Guru Granth Sahib.

(*e*) ***Seek the Master.*** But the Master can make Him visible to our inner eye.

چشم روشن کن ز خاکِ اولیا ٭ تا بہ بینی ز ابتدا تا انتہا

سرمہ کن تو خاکِ ایں بگزیدہ را ٭ ہم بسوزد ہم بسازد دیدہ را

[Enlighten thou thine eyes with the dust of saints' feet, so that all from Infinity to Eternity thou mayest behold;

apply thou the collyrium of the dust of the feet of the accepted one, so that thine eyes, which see Phenomena, may look at Reality.]

گر عیاں خواہی ز خاک پائے ایشاں سرمہ ساز ٭ زانکہ ایشاں کور ما در زاد را رہیاں کنند

[If seekest thou sight, apply thou the collyrium of the dust of his feet, for even to the born-blind doth he give eyes.]

—Shamas-i-Tabrez.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਘੋਰ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ॥

[Without the Master, all is pitch dark.]

—Guru Granth Sahib.

ਸੰਤਾ ਕੀ ਹੋਇ ਦਾਸ ਰੀ। ਇਹ ਆਚਾਰਾ ਸਿਖ ਰੀ ॥

[Do thou service to saints, learn thou this mode of life.] —Ibid.

The Spiritual Path

PART II.

A PEEP IN

PART II.

A PEEP IN

CHAPTER I.

POWER OF SPIRITUALITY

1. Recapitulation of part I.

(*a*) *Spiritual Light.*

SPIRITUAL knowledge is a transcendent experience.—a subtle condition of spiritual transport and ecstasy, an ethereal state of the soul in its naked refulgence, a merging of the drop of individual existence into the limitless ocean of Universal Life, an identification of one's finite Being with the all pervading Eternal Infinite. It is the concentration

of human consciousness at the centre of Absolute Truth, the focussing of man's Spirit at the source of Divine Inspiration. Spiritual transport is beyond all words and expressions. Just as Light and Colours cannot be defined to a blind man, similarly transport cannot be explained to a layman. It is the flight of the soul into subtler transcendent regions of spiritual ecstasy; it is the at-one-ment of man with God in a moment of superconscious rapture. It is no concern of intellect or the senses;

It is, however, inherently present in every soul, for every human being can experience a transport. But in the ordinary men, it is in a sleeping, latent or dormant state; and as it remains potential or dormant all their life, they do not even come to know of its presence. We can awaken this transcendent faculty of ours with the help of a saint, and free our souls of its gross and subtle covers and let it shine in its own naked and native lustre.

Then we shall experience superhuman bliss, and know the ultimate Reality of Life. In spiritual transport, all sensation and thoughts are suspended, and the soul beams forth in its own inherent radiance. That transcendent light illumines the dark recesses of one's being; that transcendent flood washes away all dirt from one's mind; that transcendent bliss drives away all sorrow from one's heart.

Transport exists and is its own proof; no other proof is needed. When the soul pierces the veil of Phenomena and peeps into the depth of 'Noumena', it sees transcendent secrets in the divine Light of spiritual rapture. When we state a truth, we want the authority of a higher truth to prove it; but what authority can we cite to prove the validity of the very highest truth. Transport is the Truth of all realities; it is the Proof of all proofs, and is itself therefore beyond all proof. It is the fountain-head of life and existence; it is the ultimate source of all consciousness

and being. It transcends all finite understanding and human conception. It wants eternal consciousness to know it; it requires universal insight to see it; it needs transcendent faculties to grasp it. Thus Transport exists, although Intellect cannot know it, just as the Sun shines, although bats and owls cannot see it.

"While asleep you assume your dreams to be indisputably real. Once awake you recognise them for what they are, baseless chimeras. Who can assure you then of the reliability of notions which, when awake, you derive from the senses and from reason? In relation to your present state they may be real, but it is possible also that you may enter upon another state of being, which will bear the same relation to your present state as this does to your condition when asleep. In that new sphere you will recognize that the conclusions of Reason are only chimeras. This condition is that which 'Sufis' call 'Ecstasy' or 'Hal'—a state in

which absorbed in themselves and in the suspension of sense perceptions, they have visions beyond the reach of Intellect........ Just as the man possessed only of Discrimination, rejects and denies the notions acquired by Reason, so do certain Rationalists reject and deny the notion of Inspiration. It is a proof of their profound ignorance. A man born blind, who knows neither by experience nor by information what colours and forms are, neither knows, nor understands them when some one speaks of them to him. We can have a glimpse of the idea of Inspiration or Transport from dreams in which we see things and hear sounds without the aid of our senses. As Reason constitutes a particular phase of existence in which intellectual concepts are perceived which are hidden from the senses, similarly Transport is a special state in which the inner eye, the eye of the spirit, discovers. revealed by a celestial light, mysteries out of the reach of Reason. ....We can give no other description of

Spiritual Transport except by saying that it is a kind of knowledge which cannot be attained by Reason. The little that we know of the nature of Transport, we owe to the kind of likeness to it which we find in sleep ; without that we should be incapable of comprehending it."—Al-Ghazzali.

(*b*) *Intellect and Transport.* Every faculty of man has its own sphere in which it works. The ear relates or responds to sound and the eye to light. How foolish would it be if some one tried to hear with his eyes and see with his ears ? And yet through ignorance we all fall into such an error. Intellect and Transport are two distinct faculties. Intellect works on the physical plane and helps us in getting knowledge about things of this world ; Transport works on the astral and still subtler planes, and takes us face to face with transcendent entities. One deals with phenomena, the other reveals Reality. We should not try to take that work from intellect which is the proper sphere of

transport and which transport alone can do. God, soul and all transcendent entities belong to the domain of Transport, and are for ever beyond the reach of Reason. But we strain the intellect to yield us even such transcendent knowledge; for we are unaware of the higher faculty of transport.

(*i*) *What is Beyond Intellect is not Nothing*. Sometimes we argue that whatever is beyond the grasp of Intellect is non-existent; but this is a very unreasonable position. To say that a thing is beyond human intellect, that it cannot become the content of human thought, is not equivalent to saying that it is nothing, that it does not exist. There may be things which are by nature such as cannot be understood by Intellect. It is not against reason if such things exist. Just as our sense-organs work within certain definite limits, so does our brain. Our ears can hear only those sounds which are within a fixed range of pitch and intensity; our eyes can see only those

things which are within a definite degree of brightness; similarly our intellect works within a limited sphere. Sounds beyond the fixed range are inaudible to our ears; things which are too dazzling or too dim are invisible to our eyes; thus also transcendent truths evade the grip of Reason, for they are too subtle. But as sounds may and do exist which the human ear cannot hear; as light may and does exist which the human eye cannot see; so transcendent entities do exist, although the human intellect cannot know them.

چوں بشنوی سخنِ اہل دل مگو کہ خطاست   سخن شناس نۂ دلبرا خطا اینجاست

[When to the talk of a 'lover' dost thou listen, O say not thou that it is wrong; thou thyself knowest it not, O friend; the fault in fact lieth with thee].—

Maulvi Rum.

(*ii*) *Spiritually we are blind.* Our sense-organs and intellect render us useful service in this world; but before the transcendent wisdom of spiritual transport,

they are useless.

پیش شہرِ عقلِ کلی این حواس   چون خران چشم بستہ در خراس

[Before the city of perfect wisdom, these senses are like the asses of the oil-press, blindfolded are whose eyes.]—Ibid.

A man, who is blind, tries to take the work of eyes from other sense-organs of his, but he cannot see. He may grope his way in the dark, but he has no vision. If he wants really to *see*, he should get his eye-sight restored. Similarly we cannot know Reality through Intellect. For that we must get our faculty of Transport awakened. Spiritually we are blind and in the dark.

چون ز حس بیرون نیامد آدمی   باشد از تصویرِ غیبی اعجمی

[So long as man cometh not out of his senses, ignorant of transcendent entities doth he remain.]—Ibid.

(*iii*) ***Condition in Transport.*** In the state of spiritual transport, physical organs and intellect cease to work, as they do in

sleep or in a trance; i. e., reflex movements may go on, but all conscious activity is suspended. But, while in sleep or in a trance we have either very low consciousness or none at all. In transport our soul awakes in a super-conscious light of transcendent Truth.

بهر نازش بسته بود او چشم سر   عرش و فرشش جمله در پیش نظر

[In the dream of Transport, his external eyes doth the saint close; but beholdeth he all heaven and earth.]—Ibid.

2. Saints and Death.

Saints have solved the riddle of Death; they do not move about in this material world alone, but essentially live in the blissful realms of transcendent spirituality. Every day they come down into the body to do their work here, and then go up again into their true abode in higher spiritual planes.

खाट तुलाई दसवें द्वारा, तहां करूँ बिसरामा ॥

[My bed and bedding are in 'Daswan-

Dwar'; there do I repose.]—Kabir Sahib.

Daswan-Dwar is the stage of Par-Brahma, above and beyond Brahma or Om.

(*a*) *Master's help at our Death.* If we take refuge with the spiritual adept, he will not forsake us at our death; but appear in his radiant astral form, save us from all pain, and lead us higher up into the region of eternal bliss.

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਚੜਿਆਂ ਸਿਂਉ ਤੋੜ, ਢੂੰਡ ਸਜਨ ਸੰਤ ਪੱਕਿਆਂ।
ਇਹ ਜੀਵਿੰਦੇ ਵਿਛੜੇਂ, ਓਹ ਮੋਇਆਂ ਨ ਜਾਹੀ ਛੋੜ।

[Break thou off with the false friends of this world, O Nanak, and find out thou saints who are true friends; the former leave thee in thy life-time; but the latter desert thee not even at thy Death.]

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਜਨ ਨਾਲ ਮੈਂ ਚਲਦਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਲੱਨ।
ਜਿੱਥੇ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗੀਏ ਤਿੱਥੇ ਖੜੇ ਦਿਸੱਨ ॥

[Those friends have I with me, O Nanak, who go with me at my death; and

where men have to render account, there I see them standing by me,]

Saints do not let their disciples appear before the judgment seat, or suffer pain.

ترا بروزِ حساب این امر شود معلوم　که بُود سلطنتِ بحساب درویشی

[This shalt thou know on the Judgment Day that the kingdom of 'Dervishes' hath to render no account.]—Hafiz.

(*b*) *Radiant Astral Form of the Master.* In fact the radiant form of the master or Guru is already waiting at the portal of the astral plane to receive the soul of the disciple. If he is devoted, heart and soul, and performs the spiritual practice keenly and earnestly, he would find access into the astral plane and meet the master inside now and here.

"Knock and it shall be opened; ask and it shall be given."—Bible

But in case we fail to knock during our life-time, death bursts the gate open, and at the threshold of the astral plane

we find ourselves in the warm lap of our beloved Guru.

(c) *Death of the Initiated and the Uninitiated.* Those who find shelter at the holy feet of the saint adept meet such a happy end. This body is a sort of prison for the soul; and the initiated are not afraid to go out of it, for they fly up to blissful realms. From a dirty dungeon, they go into a palace.

برج زنداں را شکست ارکانئے ہیچ اندر رنجید دل زندانئے

[If the sentry breaketh the turrets of the prison, shall that at all grieve the heart of the prisoner?]—Maulvi Rum.

He would rather be happy to be freed from bondage.

ਅਫਰਿਉ ਜਮੁ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਈ ।
ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸ਼ਬਦੈ ਨੇੜ ਨ ਆਈ ॥
ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁਣੈ ਤਾਂ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਭਾਗੈ ।
ਮਤਿ ਮਾਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹਾ ਹੇ ॥

[The furious Angel of Death cannot be

killed; but by the 'Word' of the Master cometh not near; on hearing the 'Word' from a distance doth he run away, lest the Absolute Lord should annihilate him.]

—Guru Granth Sahib.

If we love the Master, he certainly saves us from peril and pain.

ਜਿਨ ਸਤਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਉਂ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਇਆ,
ਸੇ ਖਾਲੀ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹਿੰ ।
ਤਿਨ ਜਮ ਕੀ ਤਲਬ ਨ ਹੋਵਨੀ,
ਨਾ ਓਹ ਦੁਖ ਸਹਾਹਿੰ ॥

[Whoever loveth Satguru, blank he doth not remain. No summons doth he receive from the Angel of Death, nor doth he suffer pain]—Guru Granth Sahib.

The uninitiated also go into the portal of the astral plane when they die, but quite a different fate awaits them. They suffer extreme agony of death, and after that they get no relief, but fall into the clutches of 'Jamduts,' (angels of Death), who take pleasure in tormenting and

torturing their victims.

چندکو بدز خمہائے گرزشاں   برسر ہر ژاژخاو مرزشاں

[On the head of every non-believer shall fall the violent strokes of their mace].

—Maulvi Rum.

مے برندش مے سپورندش بہ نیش   کہ بروا سگ بہ کہدانہائے خویش

[They drag him along, and prick his body with stings and say to him: "Go O dog, go thou into the filthy pit of thine own making.]

A saint's disciple dying is thus very different from a worldly man dying; this faces the rough breakers of a stormy sea and that sails on the quiet calm waters of a beautiful lake.

(*d*) *Why the death of a Saint's disciple is a time of Bliss for him.* The death of a disciple is a time of happiness for him; because he then finally flies up into the everlasting bliss of spiritual regions.

जिस मरने से जग डरे मेरे मन आनन्द ।
कबीर मरने ही से पाइये पूरन परमानन्द ॥

[That Death, which terrifieth the world, maketh me happy; for Death alone, O Kabir, taketh us to the blissful Lord.]

تلخ نبود پیشِ ایشاں مرگِ تن   چوں روند از چاہ و زنداں در چمن

[To him bitter is not the death of the body; for from a well and imprisonment goeth he into a garden.]

حجابِ چہرۂ جاں مے شود غبارِ تنم   خوشا دمے کہ ازیں چہرہ پردہ افگنم

[The dusty cloud of my physical frame is the veil that covers the face of my beloved, O happy shall I be when I lift this veil from that face.]—Hafiz.

ظاہرش مرگ و بباطن زندگی   ظاہرش ابتر نہاں پایندگی

[Apparently Death but in reality Life; outwardly Decay but inwardly Growth.]—
Maulvi Rum.

(i) *Intellectual Surety.* But we do

not know these truths, nor are we required to believe in them blindly. Saints simply invite us to accompany them to the higher spiritual planes, so that we may see with our own eyes, and know. "Seeing is believing."

However, so long as our inner eye of Transport is not opened, we can draw an inference from the case of those who have gone before us. As a matter of fact, it invariably happens that just before the time of the death of the disciple, his soul is drawn inwards to the astral plane by the spiritual magnetic attraction of the astral radiance of the Master. Thus the disciple comes to have a glimpse of Reality and an experience of ecstatic bliss, just before he leaves this world for good; and in many cases he ralates his spiritual experiences to those who may be with him at that moment.

Now, although for that disciple it is his personal transcendent experience, for others it affords only a testimonial proof. It

gives them intellectual satisfaction; but spirituality aims at absolute knowledge.

(*f*) *Spiritual Certainty.* Spiritual certainty lies in a personal experience of spiritual Reality. Even if we are going to a place of bliss after our death, it does not take away from our present troubles. If we are hungry, we want something to eat now and here. In spirituality, it is not a promise that we want, but realisation and attainment. If we are thirsty for divine knowledge, we cannot wait till death, and depend on the probable assurance of Intellect. What we want is true and transcendent knowledge in this very life; we want bliss and beatitude just now, and not after death.

जीवन मुक्ति पलक में पावै। सो संजम हमरे मन भावै॥
जीवत मुक्ति देखिये आंखी। ऐसी बिधि कोइ कहिये भाखी॥
एक पहर में मुक्ति बनावै। सो सतगुरु मेरे मन भावैं॥

[That method I like, which bringeth salvation in an instant. O tell me such a way as showeth salvation with mine own

eyes while I am alive.That Satguru I love who giveth salvation in three hours.]

—Tulsi Sahib.

3. (*a*) Saints' Greatness.

Saints are too great to be recognised by us; too high to be visible to our stunted vision.Their greatness is too transcendent to be guaged by human standards. Reformers of the world work chiefly or entirely on the physical plane; but saints move in higher transcendent realms of pure spirituality. The Sun and the Moon look so bright and so big because they are near us, whereas some stars, which may be hundreds of times bigger and brighter, can hardly be seen with the naked eye, as they are far higher up.

ہست آں ریگ اے پسر مرد خدا   کو بحق پیوست وشد از خود جدا

[Fortunate is the man, O dear, who uniteth himself with God, and cutteth off himself from himself.]—Maulvi Rum.

The saint cuts off his lower self from

his real 'self' and killing his egoism attains to transcendent union with the 'The most High.' And when he accepts us into his fold at the time of initiation. he takes on himself the responsibilty of uniting us with God. This is due to his infinite grace and mercy.

(*b*) *Unreality of the world.* In fact as mystics tell us, this world is not real as a physical material world. In the super-conscious state of Transport and in the Light of absolute Reality, this gross physical universe, loses its distinct existence and being. This world is real only so long as we are ignorant and in delusion; but once we go up above the intellect, into the regions of spiritual transport, we realise the delusive character of this 'Many-ness', and perceive with the inner eye of the soul the transcendent Truth of Spiritual Oneness.

ਏਹ ਵਿਸ਼੍ਵ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਜੋ ਤੁਮ ਦੇਖਦੇ ।
ਏਹ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ, ਹਰਿ ਰੂਪ ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ ॥

[This world of Phenomena which you see is the manifestation of God and as such I behold it.] Guru Granth Sahib.

आतम मैं जागत नहीं, सुपने सोवत लोग।
सहजो सुपने होत हैं, रोग भोग और सोग॥

[Alas! man waketh not up in his soul, but into dream doth he keep asleep; all pleasure and pain of the world, Sahjo says, are felt only in a dream.]

We have not to open our physical eyes to see true existence, nor strain our mental faculties to yield us transcendent knowledge. To see the world in its naked Reality, we have to shut our external eyes and open the inner eyes of the spirit.

ایں خیال آباد را نتواں بچشم باز دید   چشم پوشیدن ز دُنیا کارِ عینک میکند

[This delusive world cannot be seen with wide-open eyes; but closing one's eyes to the world doth serve as spectacles.]

कोटि बरस इक छिन लगैं, ज्ञान दृष्टि जो होय।
बिसरि जगत औरैं बनै, सहजो सुपने सोय॥

[For the eye of Transport, O Sahjo, millions of years are but a single moment;

and this world, which in our dream appears as real, dissolveth, and turneth into something else.]

4. Concluding.

So we see that to prove the existence of a thing, spirituality gives us the thing itself; to give us knowledge of Reality, it brings that Reality face to face with us. In that state of ecstasy we penetrate into all the hidden mysteries of life, and unveil all the deep secrets of the universe.

Spiritual knowledge is thus a personal transcendent experience, and cannot be imparted to others through the ordinary means of intellect. Language cannot convey it, human intelligence cannot grasp it. That realization is of a different kind from our experiences of this physical world. Material things bear no resemblence to subtle spiritual entities; they belong to a different order or category altogether.

Moreover spiritual knowledge is not knowledge in the ordinary sense; it is an 'effect' on the soul, or a 'transformation' of one's very being. It is not only a 'knowing' but a most intimate and spiritual 'feeling' Nay, it is not even a 'feeling'; it is a transcendent 'becoming'; it is a sort of 'taste' which is confined to personal experience. We may describe lucidly and in detail the taste and effects of various kinds of sweetmeat or fruit to a man, but by our description he cannot get a taste or 'relish' of those things. Similarly, whatever we may understand by the words of a saint, the mere words do not give us that 'feeling' of supreme bliss, that 'transformation' of our being, that 'relish' and 'taste' of transcendent Reality, that ecstatic 'effect' on the soul, which the saint experiences in his transport.

भीखा बात अगम की, कहन सुनन की नाहिं ।
जो जाने सो कहे ना, कहे सो जाने नाहिं ॥

[The secrets of transcendence cannot be told, O Bhikha: who knoweth doth not say, who saith doth not know.]

CHAPTER II.

In the Heart of Spirituality

WHEN transport is opened, the man ceases to have experiences of this material world, but his inner eye begins to see things of the subtle, astral plane. He casts off the gross physical covering, *i.e.*, this body, for the time-being, and with his subtle astral body he moves about in the astral plane.

آں توئی کہ بے بدن داری بدن   پس مترس از جسم وجاں بیروں شدن

[Thou art such as hast another body different from this, so fear not thou to go out of this physical frame.]—Maulvi Rum.

کیں جہانے چیست بس تاریک و تنگ   ہست بیروں عالمے بے بو و رنگ

[What is this world but a dark dungeon? And outside it existeth another world, formless and odourless.]—Ibid.

The region of the astral plane is just subtler than this material world. Above and beyond the astral creation, there are several transcendent realms, more ethereal and spiritual. We have to put off all gross and subtle covers from over the soul, and transport it to purely spiritual planes to behold absolute Reality.

1. Third Eye or Tenth Door.

In ordinary waking condition, the seat of the soul in the body is at the spiritual-focus midway between the two eyes, just a little above the root of the nose and slightly inwards. The soul has its focus or headquarters here; but from this point it spreads in the whole body, and permeates every pore of this mechanism, giving life and energy to every

limb and organ. When a man is waking, his soul as such does not move from this centre; but its rays, being directed downwards into the physical frame, give life to the whole body; just as the sun remains in the sky, but its rays of heat and light envelope the whole earth, and sustain all kind of life here. This seat of the soul is called '*The Third Eye*' (ਤੀਸਰਾ ਤਿਲ Tisra Til). The two physical eyes are organs through which we see phenomena of this world, but this Third Eye opens to us transcendent Reality of the next world.

"Man's five senses are like five doors opening on the external world, but more wonderful than these, he has a window inside himself, which opens on the unseen world."—Al Ghazali.

This window is the seat of the faculty of transport; but the soul is facing downwards and outwards. It is working through the nine openings in the body, *viz.*, two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, one mouth, one

organ of procreation, and the nineth that of evacuation; its current is passing outwards through these nine holes. If we collect all this current of soul energy at its focus, the Third Eye, which in contradistinction to these external nine openings or doors, is also called the '*Tenth Door*' rather 'Tenth Lane' and turn its face or direction or flow inwards and upwards, then the soul shall cease working on the physical plane, but passing through the Third Eye move in the astral, and still higher subtler regions.

باش تا مرغ از قفس آید بروں　　تا بہ بینی ہفت چرخ او را زبوں

[O, exert thou to bring the bird out of the cage; so that it may see, the seven heavens below it]—Ibid.

When saints draw up their soul from the nine external windows and take it inside into the Tenth Door, they come out of the cage and go into the land of Transport.

नौ दरवाज़े बन्द किये हैं । चढ़ गये दसवें द्वार ॥

[Closing the nine doors, into the Tenth have I ascended.]—Bullhe Shah.

ਨਉਂ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ੇ ਪਰਗਟ ਕੀਏ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਗੁਪਤ ਰਖਾਇਆ।
ਗੁਰੁ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਲਾਇ ਭਾਵਨੀ ਇਕਨਾ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਦੁਆਰ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ।
ਤਹੰ ਅਨੇਕ ਰੂਪ ਨਉਂ ਨਿਧਿ ਤਿਸ ਦਾ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਪਾਇਆ॥

[Nine doors He manifesteth but the Tenth doth He keep hidden. Through devotion to the Master (Guru), to some He showeth the Tenth Door, where are various forms and the Nine Treasures, endless and marvellous.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

Wonderful indeed are the things of transcendent regions, for they are subtle and spiritual. And the food of those realms is also spiritual. The world goes after sham elixirs; for the true nectar is found only in the land of Transport beyond the Tenth Door.

ਨਉਂ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਦਰ ਫੀਕੇ। ਰਸ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਚੋਈਜੈ॥

[Nine doors there are, and tasteless are all the nine; for real nectar droppeth inside the Tenth.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

So, in spiritual practices, we have to shut the external nine doors and open the Tenth, which faces inwards into the astral plane. This Tenth door is, so to speak, the gate between the physical world and the astral creation. This side is the world of Appearances or Phenomena, that side the world of Reality; this side the world of change, that side the world of Permanence. What we have to do is simply turning the direction of the soul-current. The soul is now looking outwards on the physical universe through the nine doors or the five senses, and its back is towards the Tenth Door or the Third Eye. If we manage to turn round, face the Tenth Door, and have our back towards the physical plane, then we shall experience transport and see transcendent entities. Like the lantern of the guard of a railway

train, the soul, so to speak, faces only one side. Its light falls only in front of it; behind, it is all dark; but turn the face of the lantern, the dark space is illumined and the place formerly lighted is now thrown into shade.

ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹਿਆ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਪਾਉਣਾ।
ਇੱਧਰੋਂ ਪੁੱਟਣਾ ਉਧਰ ਲਾਉਣਾ॥

[To find God, O Bullha thou hast only to take out from this side and implant it on the other.]

Thus for spiritual knowledge we have to take away our attention from the world, collect it at the Third Eye, and fix it in there.

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्पराङ् पश्यति नांतरात्मन्।
कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥

[Yama said, "The Self-born (God) hath set the doors of the body to face outward, therefore the soul of a man gazeth outward and not at the Self within; hardly a wise man here and there desiring immortality turneth his eyes in-

ward and seeth the Self within him."] Katha Upanishad, II. i. 1

گوش ظاہر ضبط ایں افسانہ کُن گوش باطن جاذب اسرار کُن

[Shut thou thine external ears to the tale of this world, so that thine internal ears may grasp the hidden mystery.]

ਨਉ ਦਰ ਠਾਕੇ ਧਾਵਤ ਰਹਾਏ। ਦਸਵੈ ਨਿਜ ਘਰ ਵਾਸਾ ਪਾਏ।
ਓਥੈ ਅਨਹਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਜੈ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤੀ। ਗੁਰਮੱਤੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ
ਸੁਣਾਵਣਿਆ॥

[Close thou thy nine doors, and collect thou thy scattered mind in the Tenth, which leadeth thee to thy true Home; there 'Anhad Shabd' *i. e.* Transcendent Music ringeth day and night; but only with the help of the Master canst thou hear that music.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

That Tenth Door, or Third Eye, is known by various names. It is called **शिव नेत्र** 'Shiva Netra' (God Shiva's eye), **दिव्य नेत्र** 'Divya-Netra,' Divine eye),

نقطۂ سویدا 'Nuqta-i-Savaida' (The black spot) and अष्टदल कंवल "Asht dal Kanwal" (Eight-petaled lotus).

As the aperture is very small, Jesus Christ compares it to the eye of a needle, and so does Tulsi Sahib. Our external eyes see only phenomena; but this spiritual Eye pierces into Reality, and beholds transcendant entities. If we open this Third Eye, we shall during our life-time see things of the next world, and know what happens after death.

2. Astral Plane and Beyond.

When we find entrance into the Tenth Door, we roam about in rarer regions; but not with these feet; we see subtle spiritual sights, but not with these eyes; we talk to etherial entities but not with this tongue; and we hear heavenly melodies, but not with these ears. It is a transcendent faculty of the soul which works there.

ہوش را بگذار آنکہ ہوش دار   گوش را بر بند آنکہ گوش دار

[Leave thou the plane of the intellect and come thou to spiritual consciousness; close thou these ears of thine and get thou true ears.]—Moulvi Rum.

ਅੱਖੀਂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਵਿਣ ਕੰਨਾਂ ਸੁਨਣਾ ।
ਪੈਰਾਂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਚਲਣਾ ਵਿਣ ਹਥੱਾਂ ਕਰਣਾ ।
ਜੀਭੈ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਬੋਲਣਾ ਇਉਂ ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰਣਾ ।
ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮ ਪਛਾਣਿ ਕੈ ਤਉ ਖਸਮੈ ਮਿਲਣਾ ॥

[Seeing without eyes, hearing without ears, walking without feet, working without hands, speaking without the tongue, thus dying while living, O Nanak, is the way of going to the Lord, by knowing His Will.]

خاموش کن زگفتن اگر گویدت کسے   جز حرف وصوت نیست سخن را ادا دروغ

[If any one telleth thee that talk is impossible without words and sound, stop him thou from saying so; for it is false.]—Shamas Tabrez.

In the sphere of Transport the soul talks and acts without the aid of physical organs and mental faculties.

امر ربی است روح و سر خداست　　ذکر بے کام و بے زباں او راست

[The Essence and Secret of God is the soul; without the tongue and the palate doth it talk.]—Niaz.

روح را توحید الله خوشتر است　　غیر ظاہر دست و پائے دیگر است
روح دارد بے بدن بس کاروبار　　مرغ باشد در قفس بس بے قرار

[Pleasant indeed is the path to the Lord; but different and invisible are the hands and feet there. The soul worketh without the body; for in the cage the bird getteth restless.]—Maulvi Rum.

بے پر و بے پا سفر کریدے　　بے لب و دنداں شکر میخوردے
چشم بستہ عالمے دیدے　　گل چہ چشمے کنی مے چیدے

[I have been travelling there without wings and without feet, and without the lips and teeth have I been eating sweets.

With eyes closed have I been beholding that world, and gathering flowers even when thou pluckest my eyes.]—Ibid.

(*a*) *Indescribable.* But what the saint experiences in those subtle regions, what he actually sees and hears is, strictly speaking, beyond description. When Guru Nanak told his disciples that God is Light, they asked him what sort of light He is. Is He like the Moon or the Stars? Or does His light resemble that of the Sun? Or is it like the dazzling flash of lightning? What is His light? Guru Nanak answered :—

ਝਿਲ ਮਿਲ ਝਿਲਕੇ ਚੰਦ ਨ ਤਾਰਾ ।
ਸੂਰਜ ਕਿਰਣ ਨ ਬਿਜਲ ਗੈਨਾਰਾ ॥

[Wondrously doth it glisten, but Moon, it is not, nor stars, nor even the rays of the Sun, nor yet the lightning of the sky].

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशांको न पावकः ।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥

["Nor doth the Sun lighten there, nor Moon, nor fire; having gone thither they return not; that is my supreme abode.]—Bhagawad Gita x. v. 6.

غیب را ابرے و آبے دیگر است آسمان و آفتابے دیگر است

[Of transcendent realms different are the cloud and water, different are the Sun and sky.]—Maulvi Rum.

Then Guru Nanak's disciples got impatient, and pressed him to say something of that transcendent Light. "What is it after all?" asked they. To this the Guru made answer.

ਅਕਥੀ ਕਥੋਂ ਚਿਹਨ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਈ ॥

[Of the unspeakable do I speak, for it hath no sign].

Such a talk of the Guru baffled their wits, and like some modern Philosophers, they began saying. "If you cannot tell us of that Light, if it cannot be told at all, then it does not exist. If it is

"not this, not that," then it is nothing." But Guru Nank sealed their lips by exclaiming: "It is the whole thing, the real thing. Don't say, it is nothing. It is every thing; it is the life of every thing. It is the essence of all being and the truth of all truths. It is the very ultimate absolute Reality. I see it better than any thing else, I know it better than I know this world; it is however beyond expression and above the intellect. But say not: it is nothing; for with my own inner spiritual eyes do I behold.

ਪੂਰ ਰਹਿਆ ਮਨ ਭਾਇਦਾ ॥"

[My Beloved Lord all doth pervade.]

Everywhere is God; He is transcendent yet immanent in the world. But this immanence and transcendence of the Supreme Being, and the existence of subtle spiritual planes, is hidden from the common gaze.

آنجہان و راہش او پیدا بُدے کم کسے یک لحظۂ این جا بُدے

(If manifest hath been that world and its way, then not even for a minute wouldst thou tarry in this place).

(*b*) *Abode of Bliss.* So blissful are those transcendent realms that, if we once come to know of them, all of us would fly to those spiritual planes; but alas! we know them not. And they cannot be known by Intellect or Reason. Only through actual spiritual realisation can we get an insight into spiritual knowledge, only through actual spiritual transport and ecstasy can we have a peep into the hidden realms of transcendent Reality.

Saints realise God, know Him, and enter the rare essence of His being; but describe Him they cannot, for there are no suitable words. God cannot be told in the language of this world, for there is nothing like Him here. He is one without a second. He is in Himself and by Himself. There is nothing like Him by reference to which He may be described.

Can we ever describe colours to a blind man? No, then how can saints describe their God to us? For saints we are blind. Blind men must get their eyes opened and see colours, before they can understand our description of them. Similarly we must open our inner eyes of transport and see Reality, before we can understand saints' description of it. The Vedas say of "Om" or "Brahma;"—

नेति नेति ॥

[Not this, not this.]

We may utter any word or give any epithet whatever, but He is not that. He is beyond all words and above all descriptions. Some philosophers conclude from this that He is a non-entity; He does not exist. But this betrays extreme ignorance and presumption on their part. Saints warn us of falling into this blunder; for they see Him; they know Him; they are one with Him. To them He is the most immediate and funda-

mental Reality. He exists if anything exists at all. He exists if nothing else exists. He is the true and sole Reality; all else is an existence of the second order; it is His manifestation or Appearance.

ਜਲ ਥਲ ਮਹੀਅਲ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ।
ਨਾਨਕ ਰਮਈਆ ਡੀਠਾ ॥

[All-pervading Lord hath Nanak beheld; in water on land everywhere in the world doth He live, and in all things].

(c) *Open only to spiritual Transport.* Guru Nanak has not inferred the existence of God by long processes of argumentation and reasoning; he has seen Him. But, as already explained, it is not the physical eye that sees God; it is the inner eye of Transport that can behold transcendent entities. It is not the external ear that hears heavenly Melody; it is the internal transcendent ear of the soul that can catch the strains of Divine Music.

چشمِ دیگر باید تا حُسن او دیدن تواں   گوشِ دیگر تا کلامِ دوست بشنیدن تواں

[Another eye it is that beholdeth His beauty ; a different ear it is that heareth His words].—Maulvi Rum.

لب از حدیث فرو بند گوشِ جاں بکشائے   درونِ پردہ دل اینچہ گفتگوست ببین

[Thy tongue stop thou from Speaking and open thou the ears of thy soul ; then shalt thou see what talk goeth on in the secret chamber of thy heart].

Without finding access into the Tenth Door, spiritual knowledge is impossible ; it is only Transport that reveals to us the hidden mysteries of Life, and unveils for us the transcendent secrets of God.

We argue with saints to prove to them that God does not exist. We might as well try to prove that we do not exist. What shall we think of a blind man, who comes to us with all seriousness to prove that light and colour do not exist ? We shall merely laugh at his ignorance and

folly. Do we want any arguments to convince us that we exist at this moment? No, our existence is the most immediate and fundamental reality for us. This is our starting point; all other facts are secondary, and depend on this for their validity and truth. If we do not exist, there is no question of other truths; that we exist, has for us its truth in itself.

Now saints are more certain of God's existence than we are of ours. He is the fundamental Reality for them, and all else is derived. What does it matter if God cannot be described? It does not affect His being; He is still there. He is ever present before the saints' very eyes; nay, the saints' very being is one with Him. How can they then deny His existence? They do not want any arguments; they know Him as the most immediate fact of transcendent consciousness. He is not to be discovered: He is already there in the super-conscious ecstasy of spiritual transport. By remov-

ing the veil of ignorance and delusion, saints behold His face; but our egoism hides Him from us. Saints see the absolute Reality behind Appearance; we are confined only to Phenomena. Saints realise "What is," we perceive only "What seems."

ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਕਾ ਏਕੋ ਠਾਣਾ। ਗੁਰ ਪਰਦਾ ਖੋਲ ਦਿਖਾਇਓ॥

[But one source is there of all planes and universes, and by lifting the veil hath my Guru shown it to me.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

Through spiritual transport the veil is lifted, and absolute Reality beams forth in all its innate glory and splendour. In a rapture of Divine ecstasy, the soul of the saint flies up into subtle worlds, and beholds the radiant face of the Lord, and becomes one with Him in His true essence and being.

آنچناں کز عارف از راہِ نہاں   خوش نشستہ مے رود در صد جہاں

[Like this even sitting at home, the

saint goeth by a hidden path to hundreds of worlds].—Maulvi Rum.

Leaving his body behind in this world, the saint goes with his soul into all subtle, spiritual realms and sees hundreds of worlds in one moment of universal consciousness. His eye of transport is open, and he beholds both heaven and earth in one pulse of eternal consciousness. The whole of creation, the very bosom of ultimate Reality, lies unveiled before him like an open book.

This physical universe is but a small portion of the total creation. There are numerous other universes of different kinds, some far bigger than this. Beyond the Tenth Door is the Astral plane, which is very vast; and above that is the Causal, which is much bigger still. Above and beyond the Causal Creation, we have to cross several subtler regions, before we reach the highest and most transcendent spiritual stage. Compared with the infinite vastness of that ultimate

stage, our whole universe is but a drop; it dwindles into insignificance before the tremendous hugeness of that final plane. Even millions of such universes as ours would not perhaps make a millionth part of that grand spiritual realm. Of the very last and final Reality, none can speak. What it is, who can say? It is altogether beyond our ken at the level of the intellect. Reason can find no access there. Only the pure, naked soul can know and enter the absolute, transcendent Reality. Every thing else is too gross to get in there.

Not to speak of that highest spiritual stage, we can in fact hardly imagine or comprehend even the lowest plane of subtle creation. We fail to understand saints when they refer to those planes; for they talk of things, which are no part of our experience. That person alone can grasp the signification of their words, who is thoroughly initiated into their secrets.

3. Spiritual Allegories.

So, for two reasons, spiritual language is hard to follow. Firstly, it is so to speak, technical; common words are used in a special sense. Secondly language, which is invented for use in this world of Phenomena, proves very inadequate for expressing spiritual truths of subtle, transcendent Reality. Hence, when saints attempt to put their knowledge into words, they but half succeed; for though such words are quite intelligible to other saints they do not convey much to a lay man. This however is no defect in spiritual knowledge itself; it is due to our ignorance, to the very nature of the case. Are there any words to explain forms and colours to the blind? No, then whose fault is it? Surely not of the people who see. It is the blind men who lack vision. Similarly in Spirituality, if anybody is to blame, it is we. The fault is ours, for we are blind spiritually. It is our own ignorance that

stands in the way of our understanding; otherwise saints are quite clear and plain to the initiated.

We do not understand spiritual allegories. Saints state their experiences of higher planes in terms of things of this world, for there is no other way; but we take them too literally, and thus what is in fact a transcendent truth of superconscious ecstasy turns in our hands into a monster of physical deformity and intellectual absurdity. We might mention a few cases to illustrate the point.

(*a*) *Shesh Nag*. Hindu "Shastras" state that the world rests on शेष नाग "Shesh Nag" (*i. e.* a thousand-headed serpent). People generally take this to mean that this globe of ours rests on the head of a serpent, and laugh at the foolish idea. But this is in fact a spiritual truth of transcendent significance; and it refers, not to the physical plane, but the astral. This serpent does not mean any serpent of this world; it stands

for a conflux in transcendent regions, where one thousand spiritual currents meet. That centre or focus is also called सहंस दल कंवल Sahans-dal-kanwal? " (*i. e.* thousand petaled lotus), and it is the focus from which emanate all those forces and currents of spirituality that give life and energy to the physical world. In this graded scheme of creation, from purely Spiritual regions to the Causal, and then the Astral and last of all the Physical, it is so arranged that, although each stage looks complete in itself, it depends for its sustenance and existence on the plane just above it. Thus the Causal world gets its strength and energy from the purely Spiritual regions, and the Astral plane depends for its power and support on the Causal. And similarly if we come one step further down, we find the Physical creation supported by the Astral, in as much as the source of all energy in the Physical universe lies on the Astral plane.

Now, this "Sahans-dal-kanwal," or "Shesh Nag," is the focus of one thousand spiritual rays or currents of energy, and is thus a thousand-headed serpent. As this focus is the reservoir of all energy that is used in this material world of ours, and is thus the final support of the physical universe, we may rightly say that the world rests on a thousand-headed serpent. Such a great spiritual truth has been interpreted to mean a physical impossibility and rank absurdity, only because we do not know the reality of things.

Most of the Puranas contain accounts of transcendent truths, but as they are written in the form of stories, *i. e.* in allegory, we fail to understand them. We look upon them as mere mythological anecdotes, the outcome of the extravagant imagination of an ignorant age. But in fact we ourselves are ignorant. Those stories are not false; only we are blind. To one initiated into the secrets of spirituality

and transport, they represent high truths of subtle Reality; to those who are still blind, they are nothing short of rubbish and impossible hyperbole and myth.

(*b*) *Jyoti*. Now it is a custom among the Hindus, and some other peoples too, that they burn a candle when a man is dying; and they believe that its flame shows light to the soul of the deceased in his journey to the next world. This practice is not unfounded. When a man dies, his soul goes to the Astral plane where a transcendent flame of Light keeps burning day and night; but as we are ignorant of that transcendent flame about which a saint says.

ਦੀਵਾ ਬਲੈ ਅਗਮ ਕਾ, ਬਿਨ ਬਾਤੀ ਬਿਨ ਤੇਲ ॥

[Without wick and without oil burneth the transcendent lamp].

We conclude that this candle of ours in the Physical world must be showing light to the soul on the astral plane. Similarly we burn a candle or lamp in our temples

but we know not that the transcendent lamp is burning in the Astral temple of God and keeps a flame.

उलटा कूआ गगन में तिस में जळे चिराग ॥
तिस में जळे चिराग बिना रोगन बिन बाती ।
छे रुत बारह मास रहत जलतो दिन राती ॥
सत्गुरु मिला जो होय ताहि की नज़र में आवे ।
बिन सत्गुरु जो होय नहीं ताको दरसावे ॥

[An inverted well is in the sky, and in it burneth a Lamp. In it the Lamp burneth without oil and without wick; and keepeth burning day and night in all the six seasons and twelve months of the year. He who hath found Satguru beholdeth the Light; but for those who are without Satguru, it remaineth invisible]—Paltu Sahib.

(*i*) *Man—the Microcosm.* Instead of flying up into transcedent realms and finding out that spiritual Light with the help of a saint adept, we merely burn a candle in the temple. But as all saints and prophets say, this human body is the

real and true temple of God; for in this liveth God Himself. Man is the microcosm of the whole creation, which is the macrocosm. In external temples, we do not have God, but only material idols of our own making; saints go inside themselves into the temple of the living God, and behold His divine Light. We are blind; we betray our utter ignorance by burning candles in our temples; the true candle of God is continuously and constantly burning in the Astral plane.

(c) *Ringing of Bells in Temples and churches.* Moreover, in Hindu temples and Christian churches bells are rung and other musical instruments played upon at the time of prayer and worship. Now this is only an attempted and crude copy of what is going on in the Astral world. There in the true temple of God, this music is resounding day and night, for all time and all ages. But instead of finding out that true heavenly music, we content ourselves with wordly bells and conchs, which

ring for a time and then stop, and have but little use for our spiritual uplift and awakening of the soul. Being ignorant of Reality, we play with toys, and remain content with sham copies and imitations. On the contrary we should try to find out a saint adept, and with his help listen to the true ringing of bells and conchs within ourselves in the Durbar of God. By hearing that music, we attain to transcendent knowledge and superconscious bliss, and our passions are curbed; but external bells and conchs are useless.

(*d*) *Jhanjari Dip.* Further, on the occasion of a wedding among Hindus, the bridegroom is shown a flame through a sieve, which he pierces with his sword before entering the house of the bride. Now this also represents a transcendent truth, a thing which is seen inside on the astral plane. Below the seat of ज्योति "Jyoti" (*i. e.* the Transcendent flame) there is a place which is calledझंजरी दीप (Jhanjari Dip.) From this place the light

of Jyoti appears as a flame looks through a sieve. We have to cross and pierce this stage in order to reach the Jyoti.

This mistake of applying truths of Astral and other higher planes to physical phenomena is not confined to any one community or creed, but due to ignorance all religions fall into such an error.

(*e*) *Mi'raj*. Muslims believe that their Prophet had a معراج "Mi'raj" (*i.e.* an ascent into the skies), but they do not know exactly how it happened. They believe that the Prophet Mohammad rode up to this physical sky on براق "Buraq," which is either a horse or an animal very much like it, and that he reached this moon in the sky and cleft it into two, which they technically call شق‌قمر "Shaqq-i-qamar" (*i. e.* splitting the moon). معراج (Mi'raj) means ascent, and as we are ignorant of any spiritual ascent with the subtle Astral body into the subtle heavens of the Astral plane, and utterly in the

dark about any subtle Astral moon there, we apply the description of this spiritual ascent of the Prophet to the physical universe. In the first place, how can a man fly up to the moon riding on a horse ; and secondly what is the fun in doing so; it gives us no spiritual good. And if the Prophet actually cut the moon into two, how is it that we see it whole still ? No, this description cannot apply to this material world. It refers to the subtle ascent of the soul into the Astral plane. It is further stated that the chain of the door of his room began swinging when he left, and it was still moving when he returned ; that is, it did not take him much time to go to the moon and come back. Now we cannot imagine that a horse, howsoever fast his speed may be, can go up to the moon and come back in a trice. It is physically impossible.

The real significance of this statement is that the Prophet went up into the Astral plane. He went on براق (Baraq), [the plu-

ral of برق (Barq)] which means lightning. Now this lightning refers to the internal spiritual transcendent Light. As the Prophet concentrated his attention on this spiritual current of Light that issues forth downwards and outwards from the central focus of the Astral plane, and as by this means he secured access into that subtle plane, we can say that he rode on lightning. And as we have to cross a moon in the Astral plane he is said to have pierced the moon. It is our ignorance of the true significance of such spiritual allegories that leads us to disbelieve them or make a monster of them.

(*f*) ***Christ's Ascent.*** Similarly Christians believe that Jesus Christ flew up to heaven with his physical body. But what is the need of a gross covering in the purely spiritual regions? And how can a physical thing be taken into the Astral, transcendent, world? In fact some of us seem to think that heaven is up above the skies, and hell far below the ocean. This

is our mistake. Heaven and hell are not physical. They are places in the Astral world; they are subtle and transcendent. Jesus Christ certainly ascended up into heaven, but not to this visible, physical sky. There is no spiritual significance in it. Christ went up into the subtle sky of the Astral plane. He did not go with his physical body, but with his subtle astral body.

(*i*) *Covers or sheaths on the Soul.* There are three kinds of covers on the soul, causal, astral and physical. With the physical body we move in the physical world, but we put off this gross covering when we enter the astral plane. There we move with the astral body, which also has to be cast off before we can enter the causal plane. To get access into the purely spiritual realm of naked Transcendence we have to get rid of the causal body as well. Spiritual ascent means leaving the physical body and going up into the astral plane with the subtle astral body,

and further up in the causal plane by putting off the astral body too, and finally going up into the highest regions of pure spirituality by casting off the causal body even. This is true spiritual ascent, and whosoever went up did so in this way. A man's rising high above the ground is not a spiritual flight; there is little spiritual significance in levitation.

(*ii*) *Medieval Christianity.* In the history of the Christian religion, we come across a very interesting account. There is a general belief that spiritually advanced people become lighter and levitate *i. e.* float up in the air or fly into the sky. At one time, this was taken too literally by the Christians, and those who wanted to pass for spiritually advanced people made contrivances by which they could either remain in the air in the middle of the room or better still, keep hanging by the ceiling without any visible or detectable support. One man succeeded rather well in deceiving the people, and enjoyed a wide

popularity and fame for long time. His mechanism for remaining close to the ceiling was so perfect that no body could detect it. But truth must out, they say. Falsehood succeeds for a time, but ultimately truth comes out. Once when a large number of people were gathered to pay him homage and he was just hanging by the ceiling, it so happened that the contrivance failed, something in it went wrong, the man fell down on the heads of the people below and his whole trickery was found out. The people hooted at him for his hypocrisy, and treated him very badly. In a moment, the saint was turned into Satan.

Now this is the censequence of taking spiritual statements too literally. This is, of course, true that spiritually advanced people fly up into the heavens; but it is not the physical body that rises above the ground. The lightness and consequent flight refers to the soul. If we are pure of heart and our soul is transparent like a

mirror, then certainly we become light and able to fly up with the subtle astral body into the astral plane. It is all a spiritual ascent ; but we do not understand it, because our Tenth Door is closed, our third Eye is not open. We are blind, we do not see ; we are ignorant, we do not know. We should first open the Third Eye with the help of a master and enter that Tenth Door ; then we shall understand all spiritual allegories.

(g) *Guru Nanak's going to the moon.* Not only is it said of the Prophet Mohammed and Jesus Christ that they flew up into heavens ; but similar stories are told of Guru Nanak as well. It is said that he went up to the Moon. Now this going to the Moon is altogether an internal spiritual ascent into the astral plane and beyond, with the subtle soul. It has nothing to do with the physical universe ; but by thinking that Guru Nanak ascended up to this Moon, we commit the blunder of applying truths of subtle

planes to this material world of ours and fall into a serious error.

(*h*) *Hiranya Garbha*. Similarly the Vedas mention 'Om' or Brahma as हिरण्यगर्भः "Hiranya Gharba"; but we fail to grasp its significance. We try to understand it at the level of intellect, but this refers to a transcendent state of superconscious ecstasy which is beyond the physical and even the astral plane, and above all thinking and reasoning. "Hiranya Gharba" means one who has gold inside (in the womb) and this is said of Brahma, (*i. e.* God). How does God have gold in the womb? The significance of this only saints know. It is a spiritual transcendent secret. We make a sad mistake in applying such descriptions to physical things. The reference here is to the transcendent Light of the spiritual stage of Brahma, which shines like the colour of gold, and which is the "womb" of God. It is womb, because all the lower creation of Astral and Physical planes originates and emanates

from this place, just as a child is made in the womb. The germ or seed of all creation is there, and in this it is truly the womb of God. This word, हिरण्यगर्भ "Hiranya Garbha" has also been translated as the "Golden Egg," but it does not convey much unless we grasp the right spiritual significance.

4. Concluding.

We can understand such spiritual allegories only by experiencing a transport. If we understand a spiritual statement too literally, we leave out the real meaning of the passage. If that passage be compared to a picture, then we can say that we merely see the marks of different colours; but do not recognize them as making up a significant picture of words. What we see is no doubt there; but what truly is there, what the artist has put in there, we do not see. We see only separate lines and patches of colour, but we do not see the picture that is in those colours; *i. e.* we

understand the literal meaning of words; but fail to comprehend the significane of their combination. We cannot understand spiritual literature without getting a spiritual training. Spirital light shines, but we cannot see it; we are blind.

"The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not."—Bible.

CHAPTER III.

Transcendence of spirituality.

Only the eye of transport beholdeth that divine Light. Only in an eternal moment of absolute consciousness doth the soul bathe in its radiant glory; only in a communion of ecstatic rapture doth it embrace that beauteous lustre. But the world at large knows it not.

1. The Absolute of saints.

We are all engulfed in the whirlpool of karmas, and chained to 'good' and 'bad'; but the God of great saints is beyond all duality and relativity and above all contradiction and opposition,—all-comprehending yet all-transcending, first and final, the Supreme Being, 'One' now and for ever, indivisible and eternal, ultimate and absolute.

For saints God alone is real; all else is unreal. It is He who manifesteth Himself in so many forms; but this manyness is delusion. Reality is one, single, unanalysable, indivisible; it is a supreme, spiritual, conscious Being. 'Idealism' is the theory of saints. 'Idealism' is an attempt to put into words what saints see in their spiritul transports; but strictly speaking that spiritual experience is absolutely transcendent; it cannot be put into words. The theory of ontological Idealism however is the nearest approach that language can make to an expression of spiritual

truths.

Absolute Reality is perfect in every way. It transcends all descriptions and all qualities. It is neither good nor bad, neither pure nor impure, neither limited nor unlimited, neither finite nor infinite, neither absolute nor non-absolute; it is nothing,——nothing that we can name or think. It transcends all comparison and relativity; it goes beyond the difference of manyness It is the One, Absolute and Transcendent, in Himself and by Himself, all Himself without a second. There is no other there; there is room for none else. The object of the spiritual knowledge of that stage is not "another". It is One, here, there, and everywhere, but it is above all description. It is "not this, not this". Nay, it is even beyond that. It is beyond the pairs of opposites and beyond all relativity; it is beyond the chain of cause and effect, beyond all Causation and "Karmas", beyond all knowing, feeling and willing, beyond all actions and all deeds, beyond desires,

beyond instincts, beyond everything and all things. And yet it is in every thing, and with everything; it is everything itself. Nothing exists except that "It."

ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੋ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ। ਦੂਸਰ ਹੋਆ ਨ ਹੋਗ॥

[One alone pervadeth, O Nanak; no second was there, nor ever shall be.]

ہم کوزہ و ہم کوزہ گر و ہم گِلِ کوزہ

[Himself is the pot, and Himself the pot—maker, and Himself even the clay of the pot.]

ਸਭ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਹੈ। ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਬਿਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੋਈ॥

[All is God, all is God: nothing is but God.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

This ultimate stage is beyond all Phenomena, or Maya, and Delusion, and above all ignorance and darkness. Neither pleasure is there nor pain, neither gain nor loss, neither reward nor punishment, neither success nor failure, neither goodness nor badness, neither activity nor non-

activity, neither perfection nor imperfection, neither transcendence nor non-transcendence; nothing is there that men can think of, nothing that may be explained or even pointed out. And still that spiritual Reality is there – penetrating all creation and immanent in every thing and being. In the super-conscious ecstasy of the highest transport, there is neither person nor character, neither Life nor Death, neither Existence nor Non-Existence, nothing, nothing at all of this world. It is pure and perfect spirituality, through and through transcendent. It is Absolute in every way, all in itself, through itself, by Itself and for Itself. It is all in all, the ultimate Absolute Reality. All else is its manifestation or Appearance.

(2) Transcendent Bliss.

From the description given above, it might seem that this highest stage is a place of indifference or neutrality; but it is not so. That highest spiritual plane

is a realm of supreme bliss and beatitude, but this bliss must be something different from, yet infinitely better than the happiness we can experience on the sensual or intellectual level. Moreover this bliss is eternal and absolute; it does not depend on anything else; it is in itself, independent and transcendent.

It is no worldly feeling or experience; but an infinitely higher and deeper Reality, which becomes identical with our soul in a state of superconscious rapture. This bliss knows no opposite; it is not bliss in contrast with something which is non-bliss. No, it is an absolute and positive state of the soul in its naked transcendence and spirituality. True happiness lies in spiritual transport and realisation. "Anthony sought happiness in love, Brutus in glory, Cæsar in dominion. The first found disgrace, the second disgust, the last ingratitude, and each destruction. The things of the world being weighed in the balance are all found wanting. Self-reali-

sation alone will bring true peace and happiness." And what is that ultimate spiritual state of self-realisation ?

बेगमपुरा शहर को नांव । दूख अंदोह नहीं तहं ठांव ॥
न तसवीस ख़िराज न माल । ख़ौफ़ न ख़ता न तरस ज़वाल ॥
अब मोहि ख़ूब वतन गह पाई । ऊहां ख़ैर सदा मेरे भाई ॥
काइम दाइम सदा पातशाही । दोम न सोम ऐकसो आही ॥

["Woe-less" is the city called; no trouble existeth there nor worry; no apprehensive no goods, no taxes; nor fear of blundering, nor danger of falling. Now have I found a wondorous home; and ever safe is that, O brother. Everlasting is that kingship, no second or third but ever one].—Ravidas Ji.

Oneness reigneth supreme there, and transcendently blissful is that realm.

ਸੂਖ ਮਹਲ ਜਾਕੇ ਊਚ ਦੁਆਰੇ ।
ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਵਾਸੀਹਿ ਭਗਤ ਪਿਆਰੇ ॥

[Blissful are Whose mansions and lofty are Whose gates; there reside His beloved devotees.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

ਸਹਜ ਕਥਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਅਤਿ ਮੀਠੀ।
ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕਾਹੂ ਨੇਤ੍ਰਹੁ ਡੀਠੀ ॥

[The "Transcendent Word" of the Lord is wondrous sweet; rare are the people, who with their own eyes behold it.]—Ibid.

That supreme bliss, transcends both pleasure and pain.

کاں در اندر چو در آئی وا رہی　　از غم و شادی قدم بیروں نہی

[For when thou enterest that door, beyond both pleasure and pain dost thou go.]—Maulvi Rum.

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनु प्रविष्टं गुहाहितंगह्वरेष्टं पुराणम् ।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥

[Realising by attainment through spiritual yoga the secret, ancient, and inaccessible Deity, Who in the recess of Life is lodged, in the heart of things, in the cavern of being, the wise man banisheth joy and sorrow from him"].—Katha Upanishad 1-11-12.

That super-conscious ecstasy leaves

no room for dualities and relativities. The one Absolute Truth permeates every pore of our being, the one Transcendent Light sheds its radiance on all our existence.

The condition of that transcendent stage is indescribable. It is in fact wrong to talk of the "condition" of that stage or even to call it a "stage."

It is for lack of a more adequate expression that saints describe that final stage of spiritual ascent as an ocean of absolute bliss and beatitude. In that Absolute stage, Knowledge, Love and Bliss meet in their rarest transcendence, and become one. It is this supreme Oneness that is the ultimate Reality, and in that highest state of superconscious ecstasy and divine rapture, there is nothing else but this One-ness.

It is always One,—here, there, and everywhere, in Himself and by Himself, absolute and transcendent, all-absorbing and all-pervading, all-comprehending and all-penetrating, all-sustaining and all-

annihilating, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent and yet single, unanalysable, Unity. It is One in many, and Many in One; but always the same One,——Comprehending and transcending all.

ਤਹ ਮਰਨ ਨ ਜੀਵਨ ਸੋਗ ਨ ਹਰਖਾ ॥

[Neither death is there nor birth, neither pleasure nor pain.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

In that supremely transcendent stage, Bliss, Knowledge, Truth, Love, Existence, Reality, Spirituality, Being,—all these mean the same thing, for there is only one. It is oneness through and through, call it what we may. It is everything and all this in one, and this One is indivisible and unanalyzable. It is Bliss, it is Knowledge, it is Reality, but it is never more than One. That one is Ultimate Absolute, Transcendent, Eternal, without any divisions or partitions, without any flaw or frailty. It is "One", which appears as "many" to our deluded eyes; but in itself, it is always and for ever the Indivisible

One.

3. Beyond Good and Evil.

Morality is essential to transport. We cannot find access into subtler planes unless we are morally good. Spiritual practice helps us in our moral advancement, and the more moral we are, the better we can perform the spiritual practice. But beginning with morality, Spirituality in its advanced stages leaves all morality behind. We go from evil to the stage of mixed good and evil, and thence to the stage of pure good; but when we go still higher, we transcend all distinctions of 'good' and 'evil'. We go beyond the sphere of relativity and duality, morality and manyness.

ਬੁਰਾ ਭਲਾ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਸ ਨੋ ਕਹੀਐ। ਸਗਲੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੁਮ੍ਹਾਰੇ ॥

[Whom shall we call good or bad when all creatures are Thine.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

When all things and beings are really One, whom can we call good or evil? This

is the transcendent stage, which is beyond all dualities and relativities. Oneness reigns supreme there. No room is left for a second; the Absolute One is the sole reality. It is beyond all descriptions and comparisons; no words can ever express It; no thought can ever reach It.

Thus the ultimate, absolute, naked Reality cannot be called good or bad. It is altogether beyond the sphere of morality; it is all-penetrating, all-pervading, all comprehending, yet all-transcending. It envelopes in its circle all that is and all that may be. If we call it good, then evil would be something outside it; but there is nothing outside. Every thing is in it.

نہ عصیاں ماند و نے طاعت شدم محو اندروں ساعت

چناں گشتم درآں حالت کہ وے من گشت من ہم وے

[Neither vice is there, nor virtue; into that moment of Absolute Consciousness am I lost; and into that transcendent state have I gone that He hath become even

myself and I Him.)—Muin-ud-Din Chishti.

جملگی یکساں بود شاں نیک و بد ؛ زچہ باشد ایں ز حسن ظن خود

[With the same eye doth he look on good and evil, for the absolute goodness of his own self hath he realised]—Maulvi Rum.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਖਾਲਕ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਲਕ ਵਸੈ ਰਬ ਮਾਹਿਂ ।
ਮੰਦਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੋ ਆਖੀਐ, ਜਾਂ ਤਿਸ ਬਿਨ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹਿਂ ॥

[In His creation is God, O Farid, and the creation liveth in Him. Whom can we call evil, when save Him none doth exist]

"We live, move, and have our being in Him".

(4) Non-attachment Philosophy of the Bhagawad Gita.

Saints of subtle transcendent stages lay stress on "action without desire". In the Bhagawad Gita, Lord Krishna also enunciates the principle of doing actions

without attachment to their fruit. Now, how can a man act without having desire? Generally it is our desire for the fruit of our action that goads us on to activity. Psychologically speaking, it is the interest we take in things that enables us to attend to them. Interest implies desire of some form. If we have no interest or desire, then there is nothing to prompt us to action. So the question arises. Can we act without desire at all? Psychology says—"No"; Spirituality says—"yes".

(*a*) *Action without desire.* It is in two ways that we can act without cherishing any desire. Firstly, we may not be attached to the action we are performing; but to something else which involves that action. Here our action is not an end in itself but only a means to an end. We are still attached to action but only indirectly. Now if the other thing which we are attached to is nothing worldly, if it is God Himself, then we can in a way say that we are not attached to actions, meaning

thereby that we perform them because they are a means for realising God. But strictly speaking, it is not absolutely a case of action without desire. This is, however, the first step, and might lead to a true desireless action.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥

["Thy business is with the action only, never with its fruit; so let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor be thou to inaction attached."]—Bhagawad Gita. II.47.

This means that we can perform all actions, considering them as our duty, so to speak, desiring neither success nor failure. Thus we shall not be attached to the fruit of action. If we do all actions merely because we know we have to do them, then we shall have no desire accompanying them. We do those actions simply because God wants us to do them.

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासंगं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः॥

["Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of action, always content, nowwhere seeking refuge, he is not doing anything, although doing actions".]—Bhagawad Gita iv. 20.

This is what is called **निह कर्म होना** *i. e.* becoming a non-doer; but some desire may still be left lurking *viz*, a desire to please God or to act according to the dictates of Duty. We may give up worldy desire as a means to find God. In that case the desire to find God shall still be in us.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जंतोर्निहितो गुहायाम् ।
तमक्रतु; पश्यति वीतशोको धातु: प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मन: ॥

["Smaller than an atom, huger than hugeness, the Spirit abideth hidden in the secret heart of this creature; when a man is stripped of wishes and weaned from sorrow, then he beholdeth the Spirit; purified from temperament he seeth God in His Glory".]- Katha Upanishad. 1-II-20.

When, however, the soul of a man becomes one with God, all desire must end;

because God is perfect and has no desires. In their transport saints of the highest order enter the transcendent being of God, and become one with Him. They are altogether above desire and all other frailties of the flesh. They are *in* this world, but not *of* it. They have the appearance of men, but they are not men. They are super-men. Nay, they are beyond that even. They are God Himself; they are one with the ultimate, absolute, transcendent Reality. In a superconscious state of ecstatic rapture, they lose their individuality in the all-enveloping and all-transcending Reality of Absolute Oneness. And where there is only One, there is no scope for desire.

What appears to us as "many" is a delusion; "manyness" and variety is ignorance and darkness. "One" is the reality. That Reality Saints come to know in their super-conscious ecstasy of transport; they enter it, and embrace it and become identical with it. They see,

realise, know, and become the very Absolute Reality which is "One". All action, all desire, all phenomena, even our own existence as men, and the existence of this world as the world,—all is Delusion. The existence of anything as a thing separate and distinct from that One Reality is delusion. We are in this delusion, and because for us this world and all its things are real, we are real, our actions are real; so are our desires. But when once through spiritual transport, we realise the delusive character of all these things, and go out of this ignorance, we are beyond all actions and desires now and for ever. All our activities are in delusion. We are wise and foolish in delusion, we are pious and wicked, learned and ignorant, strong and weak, well and ill, hungry and full, 'desireful' and desireless all in delusion.

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥

["The Lord accepteth neither the evil-

doing nor yet the well-doing of any. Wisdom is enveloped by unwisdom; there with mortals are deluded".]—Bhagawad Gita v. 15.

We are deluded, saints are not. They have gone beyond this darkness; they live in the Light of ultimate absolute Reality. And when they transcend the bounds of all ignorance, how can they be subject to any particular item or bit of it? When they are altogether beyond delusion, how can they have desire which is a part and phenomenon of "Delusion". They are above all desires, and beyond all human emotions and feelings. In fact they do not act; for action, too, is in delusion. It is God who acts through them. They have no "being" separate from God, and their physical appearance of man is also a delusion. Their real essence is transcendent and absolute. We must get out of the universal delusion of this physical creation, if we want to be non-doers, if we are anxious to go beyond "Maya," beyond

the range of desires and Karmas; and the exit leading out of this delusion of Phenomena is the portal of spiritual transport, which can be opened by a true master.

(*b*) *Real Renunciation.* Thus does the true saint give up all desire. He renounces every thing, he turns out all else from his mind except the One ultimate Truth. This is true renunciation—to drive out of Self, every thing that is not the true self, the absolute Reality, and then to live in the Life and Light of that spiritual Transcendence.

طریقِ کام جُستن چیست ترکِ کامِ خود گفتن کلاہِ سروری این است اگر این ترک بردوزی

["What is the fulfilment of desire?—Renouncing all desire. The royal crown is this that every thing dost thou renounce.]

A man who has no desire has no want, and he who has no want is the king of kings. True happiness lies in contentment and Spiritual realisation. One who casts off all desire gets rid of all worry

and anxiety.

دردلِ بے آرزو راہِ غم و تشویش نیست   درجہان بے نیازی ہیچ کس درویش نیست

[In the desireless mind entereth neither worry nor woe; in the world of "Desirelessness" beggar is none.]

One who wants nothing, "hath all". In the eyes of saints rich and big people even kings and emperors are beggars, for they are still in want. They have much, but they want more. When king Alexander the Great went to see the saint Diogenes, the former offered the other to ask for a boon, but the latter said to him, "Thou art thyself a beggar for thou desirest still more; what wouldst thou give me? And I am perfectly happy, I want nothing. "When Alexander pressed him to have something, then, as it was cold winter, Diogenes said, " All right, stand aside and let me have a little more of the Sun," Saints look upon even the God Indra as a beggar, for having so much He still hath

desire for more.

When Sarmad, a great saint was brought bare-headed* before Aurangzeb he was questioned as to how he dared to come in the presence of the emperor without properly covering his head; and he replied.

سر برہنہ نیستم دارم کلاہِ چار ترک   ترکِ دُنیا ترکِ عقبیٰ ترکِ مولیٰ ترکِ ترک

[Bare-headed am I not, for I wear the cap of four renunciations, renunciation of this world, renunciation of the next world, renunciation of God, and renunciation of Renunciation.]

Saints renounce every thing, for all in this world is delusion and darkness; even our idea of God is an item of ignorance. In Spirituality we begin by giving up our desires of this world and those for the next, but in later stages we renounce all ideas and every thing. We renounce

*In India going bare-headed before a big person shows lack of respect.

"manyness," and embrace absolute oneness. We renounce even God as an entity separate and different from our existence; for we are one with the Father, as Christ said. We renounce even renunciation itself for we transcend the distinction between renunciation and non-renunciation. We become absolutely transcendent.

(c) *Beyond Intellectual grasp.* The Philosophy of non-attachment is very deep; it is for those only who wish to know the ultimate Reality, and desire spiritual flights into subtle regions of transcendent Spirituality.

And it is in Spirituality only that such a philosophy finds its full appreciation and complete explanation; it is Saints alone who understand and grasp its profound and subtle significance. At the intellectual level we are in delusion, and this philosophy of transcendent Reality is not for us.

ਪੰਡਿਤ ਸੋ ਨ ਆਖੀਏ ਜੋ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਗੁਨ ਕਥੈ ਬਨਾਇ ।
ਪੰਡਿਤ ਸੋਈ ਜਾਨੀਏ, ਜੋ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਬਿਸਰ ਸਭ ਜਾਇ ॥

[Pandit (man of knowledge) is not he, who studieth, thinketh, and delivereth discourses; Pandit is he who forgetteth all that he hath read.]

We have to drive away the pride of intellectual learning from our mind to make room for spiritual insight and transcendent knowledge.

علموں بس کریں اویار اِکّو الف تیرے درکار

[Enough of thy learning, O friend; only one *Alpha* dost thon need.]—Bullha Shah.

The one single Reality—the absolute One—is enough for us; because all variety is delusion. In unity abideth absolute Truth, variety shows false Appearances; Unity reveals true knowledge, variety betrays blind groping and guessing; Unity is perfect and absolute, comprehensive and transcendent; Variety is imperfect relative, narrow, superficial, and Unity is whole and One; Variety is fragmentary and "many".

The Spiritual path is very subtle, its

philosophy is also subtle. We shall understand and realise all this subtlety, if a true saint sheds his lustre upon us. It is only by his unbounded grace that we can be initiated into transcendent secrets of transport and ecstasy; it is only through his infinite mercy that we can know the ultimate Truth, and realise the absolute Reality. In fact even for an intellectual understanding of the theory and philosophy of Spirituality we want a living master.

5. Contradictions in Spiritual Writings Explained.

To a superficial observer, Spirituality is full of contradictions, because Spiritual knowledge is beyond the sphere of Intellect. Apparently all books of Spiritual knowledge present a number of glaring contradictions, and an ordinary reader finds it hard to reconcile them. But if we dive deep into the profound significance and import of words, we find that the contradictions are only skin-deep; they are contradictions of

words and not of meanings. Reality, in fact, cannot be expressed in any but contradictory terms, and even then it is not adequately expressed. Any attempt to put transcendent truths of Spiritual transport in words of ordinary language leads us into verbal contradictions; or we can say, Reality has many sides and phases; it is so comprehensive that no one theory can express it. All opposed and contradictory views must be welded together to include all sides and aspects of total Reality.

And how do Saints solve this contradiction. They do not enter into long and fruitless intellectual discussions; they go inside and up into astral, causal, and still subtler spiritual planes, and see Reality from all points of view. Reality appears as "many" in the world of physical things. This is the delusive Appearance of Reality, it is Phenomena or Maya, which we all experience. But if we go a little higher *i. e.*, into the subtle astral plane;

our angle of vision is changed; and our delusion is partially removed. At the physical level we were blind; we did not see Reality but only perceived Phenomena; out on the Astral plane we begin to see Reality although our vision is still defective and jaundiced. But we *do* see, and this seeing yields us a different result from what our intellectual groping gave us on the physical plane. From a distance a bush looks like a man sitting on the ground, but approaching it we find no man but only the bush. Similarly when one goes further higher up, he has a truer view of Reality. This is a very crude simile to illustrate the point.

(*a*) *Hidden Reality.* God is in the world, but we do not see Him; He is too subtle for these physical eyes. But if we ourselves become subtle, we can come into contact with Him. God is in the world as "Ghee" (clarified butter) is in milk, and fire in wood, we do not see butter in milk, nor does milk serve the purpose for which

butter is used; but if we churn milk we can take out the butter. Similarly, fire is not visible in wood, nor does it burn us if we touch it, but if we rub one piece against another, fire will come out and first consume those pieces of wood themselves, and then such things as be near. Similarly God is in the world, but unless we make Him manifest by Spiritual practices, he remains hidden. Just as in the world, matter is not lost or destroyed, it only changes form; similarly God or Reality is always there, it only appears differently on different spiritual planes. God is always one; He appears as "Many"; just as the same thing appears in three different forms of vapour, water and ice. The thing or essence or Reality is the same, only the form of appearance is different. God is the Reality and Essence of all things and beings. He is the same all over, but to our jaundiced vision, He appears as an infinite number of different and distinct things. This is in delusion or ignorance

of true Reality. At higher spiritual stages, Reality is visibe in a purer and more naked form. Things of one plane are ture and real for that plane, but in the higher light of a subtler plane, they become delusive and unreal.

(*b*) *Grades of Reality.* Thus we can say that Reality has grades. At the last and final transcendent stage Reality is in its Absolute Truth and nakedness. There it is One, Whole and Indivisible, All comprehending and All-transcending. In the regions just below this absolute stage, Reality appears in a different and slightly unreal or covered form. Still it is one, but not so naked and pure as on the highest plane. Coming down still lower, we find that "One" Reality appearing in still different forms, which are unreal and delusive proportionately to their distance (so to speak) from the highest peak of pure spiritual transcendence. At last we reach the Physical world, where "Reality" is all hidden, and

we see only "Appearance", which looks as so many different things.

The phenomena of each plane are true for that plane; they are the same order of truth as the existence of that plane. But in the truer, and more penetrating light of the next higher plane, this truth loses its validity and force. And so on with still higher, subtler planes. Now if we compare the knowledge of this physical world acquired through intellect with the transcendent insight of spiritual transport, we find that in this material world, our existence is real; but from the point of view of transcendent Reality this world itself ceases to be real as a physical world, nor do we have any existence as men. Now which is the truth? Are we real or unreal? Does this world exist or not? Well the absolute truth is that neither the world exists, nor man. But this final truth cannot come into the mind of man, so long as he is on the human level; because in absolute Reality his mind does not

exist as such (of course, soul is different from mind). How can true knowledge come into a delusive, unreal mind? Our mind and we have no existence in the same sense in which this world has no existence.

Hence for us as men, this world exists, *i.e.* for the deluded mind, the world of delusion is a reality. This world is the same order of Reality as we ourselves; if we are, this world also is. But as we are not real, so is this world unreal. This last is the ultimate, absolute, transcendent Truth. But if we are unreal, then our doings, our desires, our thoughts, all are unreal; and then the question of contradiction does not arise, for it pertains to thought, and "thought" is unreal. For the saints of the Absolute stage reality is the Transcendent One; for us it is this world of many-ness. They embrace Absolute Reality; we grope in relative Reality or Appearance.

(c) *Free Will.* This also settles the

question of the free-will of man and the foreknowledge of God. Both can be true at the same time, for they are truths of different grades of Reality. If the very existence of man is a delusion, then anything about him, his intellect, his free will etc. cannot be real. If a thing is unreal, its qualities or attributes are also unreal. Thus in Absolute Truth, man has no existence as man and consequently his free-will is also non-existent, (or rather the question of his free-will does not arise); but for men and in this world of Delusion and Appearance, where man has an existence, his free-will also exists. Our existence as men and our free-will are realities of the same order. They are real, relative to each other, but unreal in Absolute Truth. For men, free-will is real and the world is real; but if we realise the unreality of our very being as men, the reality of our free-will and of this world also vanishes. The Absolute Reality is truly One, but it is not for men to say so; for they can never know

it so long as they are human. It is only the superhuman insight of Spiritual transport that reveals Reality as the Transcendent, Absolute One.

(*d*) *Relative Truth, and Absolute Truth.* The contradictions in saints' writings are thus due to the fact that they are truths of different planes. What is true at one stage may not be true at another. All is relative truth below the very highest realm, where we have absolute Truth; but as our very existence as men is relative. here on the physical plane, we have to deal with relative truth. Absolute truth would be out of place in this world. If we want Absolute Truth, we can have it by Spiritual transport; but when we reach the super-conscious state of Absolute Truth, which is the transcendent Oneness of Reality, we shall cease to be men. Absolute Truth has no meaning for us as men. We live in the world of Phenomena and Appearance, and what we experience is 'Manyness'. In this world of 'Manyness', we

have to go by the relative truth of this plane. For Absolute knowledge, this whole world is unreal; and then there can be no question of truth or false-hood.

(6) Recapitulation.

Thus we see that saints of the highest order transcend the bounds of morality; they go beyond 'good' and 'evil', and attain to the spiritual state of absolute bliss and beatitude. That super-conscious stage of Spiritual Transport knows no sorrow nor sadness, no worry nor anxiety; it is beyond all desires and wants, and above all ideas and notions. If we reach that highest stage of transcendent union of the Individual with the Universal, then we go altogether beyond the domain of desire. This is the Non-attachment Philosophy of the saints, who cut off all attachment with things of this world, and liberate their soul from the burden of worldly desire and the bondage of karmas. They act but they have no desire. Success or failure,

riches or poverty, fame or disrepute, all is one for them; but they need not make a parade of their greatness and transcendence; they lead a life of humility. And to attain to that transcendent stage 'beyond good and evil' beyond desires and wants, intellectual learning is not needed. In fact pride of intellectual knowledge is a hindrance to spiritual insight. What we require is a true Spiritual adept.

The apparent contradictions in Spiritual writings are utterances of different planes or grades of Reality. The truth of every plane, except the very highest and last, is relative. It may become untrue in the light of the truth of a higher stage; but this higher truth, although it supersedes the lower one, does not falsify it as such. The truth of the lower plane shall ever remain true for that plane; but it is not the final truth. As the soul rises during a spiritual transport into realms of higher and higher transcendence, it gets wider, truer, more comprehensive, and more exact views of

Reality; and at the final stage, the Reality is seen as the Absolute One. There the soul becomes identical with this ultimate Unity. At that stage, absolute and naked Oneness reigns supreme; but then there is no man, no world, no mind, no thinking, no question of relative and absolute, no question of truth and falsehood, no words, no talk, no phenomena, no action, nothing except the absolute transcendent One. When we are in the physical world, relative truth is the truth for us; but the final truth is still the absolute truth of transcendent Oneness. When we attain to that stage of Absolute Truth, then there would be no 'second' to be talked to, no action, no deed, no word and no thought; there would be nothing at all except that universal, eternal Oneness. Such a stage is beyond human conception and imagination. To understand Spirituality we want spiritual training under an adept; we want the Spiritual teacher not only for experiencing transport, but even for getting an intellec-

tual grasp of Spiritual philosophy, if we may call it so. The essential factor in Spirituality is the Master.

CHAPTER IV.

Offshoots of Spirituality.

There are certain practices, which do not come within Spirituality proper, but are allied to it. They are, so to speak, on the border-line. Under this category we have mesmerism, hypnotism, clairvoyance, occultism thought-reading, personal-magnetism, etc. which may be called the offshoots of Spirituality and are sometimes its abuse. A word needs be said about them before we pass on to true Spiritual methods.

1. Concentration.

In all these practices, as also in Spirituality, the first step is concentration,

i. e. the collection of one's scattered mind or the focussing of one's attention on a point. Concentration of attention increases one's power of control over things; and it is quite natural too, for scattered energy cannot achieve what collected can do. The spirit-current that from the focus of the Third-Eye flows outwards in a thousand channels, and gives strength to every limb and organ of the body, is scattered. It is divided into parts, so to speak, each part doing its own job, so that the same current does a variety of work. It sees through the eyes, hears with the ears, smells with the nose, and eats through the mouth. By means of the tongue and the lips it speaks, with the feet it walks, and with the hands performs multifarious actions. Apart from these physical functions, there are countless mental processes that are ever going on within man. Thus our soul spends its energy in a hundred and one ways. Now if we give our whole attention to hearing, we can catch even very low sound; that is,

attention increases our power of hearing; and so on with all other functions and activities of ours. To appreciate delicate shades of colour in a picture, or to see a minute thing, we have to strain our eyes; and when we want to lift up a heavy weight, we strive to put all our energy into our hands and muscles. Concentrated attention ever means increased power.

Further, if by means of Spiritual practices, we want to transport our soul from the physical world into the astral plane, we must collect it first. If our soul is scattered, what is there to be lifted? In this world when we go on a journey, we pack up our luggage before carrying it with us; similarly when we desire a flight into transcendent spiritual realms, we have to concentrate our spirit-energy before we can move. Our soul spread in the body may be likened to an army scattered over a vast area. It must be collected at its head-quarters or focus before it can shift its place

2. Spirituality and Mesmerism.

Now, mesmerism, hypnotism etc. are akin to Spirituality in as much as all these imply concentration of mind and attention. But while in spirituality, the soul-current is focussed inside oneself, and its concentrated energy is used for taking it up into transcendent realms, in mesmerism etc. the centre of attention where the mind is collected is some extraneous point; so that the concentrated energy is not used for any spiritual uplift, but dissipated in the phenomena of this world. Thus saints muster up their spirit energy, and utilize it for their betterment, enlightenment and spiritual awakening; mesmerists also collect their little wealth, but they squander it away in idle pursuits.

If we concentrate within ourselves, then the point of application of the spirit-current is inside us; the flow of the current of soul-energy is inwards. Consequently its collected power can be utilized for flying up into astral and other higher

subtler planes within us. But if we concentrate at some spot which is outside us, then the point of application of the spirit-current is outside our body; the flow of our soul-energy is outwards into Phenomena of this world, and consequently we cannot use this collected energy for any spiritual ascent into the subtle astral plane. Ascent is always inwards; outside it is all physical phenomena.

Thus while the saints's spiritual path leads to spiritual insight and heavenly transport, mesmeric practices and others of this sort are not spiritual exercises

(*a*) *Nature of Mesmerism etc.* These are either practised concentration of thought employed to secure knowledge of physical things without the aid of physical organs, or strengthened will-power used to control and subdue the will of others. In these we generally begin by concentrating our attention on a point on the wall or a similar place, and go on with this practice till we get solely absorbed in our

concentration. Gradually the attention is trained to collect at a point outside us. When afterwards we mesmerize or hypnotize a person, e collect our spirit energy on him and try to overpower his mind. To be able to do so successfully, the 'recipient' the 'agent' or the 'medium' should be of a weaker mind or will-power than ourselves; otherwise, we shall not be able to subdue him. If our 'collected' thought-energy or will-power is not greater than that of the person who is the 'object' of our 'operation' or performance, then our concentrated 'will' cannot overcome his mind. That is why people with weak minds and feeble will-power are chosen for a feat of this sort. It is generally women or children, who readily yield to 'hypnotic passes' and 'mesmeric gazes', and on whom, consequently such practices work successfully and satisfactorily. We cannot hypnotize or mesmerize a saint for his spirit-current and attention-force are far stronger and greater than ours.

(*b*) *Their Use.* Such practices are generally used for seeing distant or hidden things, discovering thieves and cheats, and getting news of absent friends. Strengthened will-power may be used to influence and overawe others, or cure people of their diseases, especially mental ailments. Several doctors use such powers as a supplement to their medicinal treatment, and professionals make money by showing their mesmeric and hypnotic feats to the public. By such practices things can be brought from a distance without any visible means of conveyance or physical aid, and people are made to stay in mid-air without any material prop or support.

(*c*) *Miracles.* Sometimes such super-natural things are done by saints with the help of their inner miracle-working power. Saints of higher orders always act for the good of others; but some lower class of mystics might use their power to show feats etc. Such people, however, soon lose their

power and become blank. Yogis are said to possess miraculous powers of levitation, suspension of breath, sustenance without food etc.

3. Spiritual View.

But in true spiritual schools, such things are looked upon as mere juggler's tricks; not because they are not supernatural, but because they are powers of the lowest spiritual state, rather to be avoided as temptations than hugged as blessings. Every pursuit and every line has its own pitfalls, and these powers are the stumbling block in the way of true spiritual uplift, and transcendent flight.

Those subtle powers, which are the very zenith of mesmeric glory, and the height of hypnotic control meet the saints at the very threshold of spiritual ascent into transcendent realms. They lie at the feet of the saint and in the hope of being favoured with a service

several other powers of higher orders keep waiting on him.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਉਲਟੀ ਭਈ,
ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਖਰਚਿਉ ਖਾਇ ।
ਅਠਾਰਹ ਸਿੱਧੀ ਪਿੱਛੈ ਲੱਗੀਆ ਫਿਰਨਿ,
ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਜ ਥਾਇ ॥

[By meeting Satguru our spirit energy is turned upwards, for at our disposal are the 'Nine Treasures,' the 'Eighteen supernatural powers' (Siddhis) follow us; and in true transcendent our home do we find abode.]—Guru GranthSahib.

But although such powers come to a saint at the very outset of his spiritual journey into transcendent regions, he considers it below his dignity to use them. A very rich man would be ashamed of giving a pice to a beggar. He would either give a hand-ful of silver and gold, or nothing at all. Similarly saints do not condescend to show feats of mesmeric and hypnotic powers. Either they give us Transport

and Insight into transcendent Reality, and take us out of Delusion altogether; or they do not touch us at all. It is not becoming on their part to indulge in feats with ordinary phenomena of this world, which would be hardly better than juggler's tricks. Too exalted and majestic is the true saint to stoop to such low performances for the vain satisfaction of the blind curiosity of an ignorant multitude.

नाटक चेटक किये कुकाजा ।
प्रभ लोगन को आवत लाजा ॥

[To indulge, in the jugglery of supernatural feats, shame doth the saint feel.] Guru Gobind Singh.

Further, knowledge got through mesmerism, hypnotism, and other practices of the sort, is confined to this physical creation and its things. It may touch the brink of the subtle astral plane, but can secure no access into it, and the rarer spiritual transcendent realms are altogether beyond its reach. Hence it is of

little use in true spirituality; for it does not take us beyond Delusion.

Moreover such powers may be used for good, or for evil. We can do a man a world of good if our will-power or mind is much stronger than his; we can also do him a lot of harm. It all depends on our moral and spiritual training. But the true spiritual path does not only strengthen our will-power; it also trains our mind to move in the direction of goodness, and away from evil. Therefore practices like mesmerism and hypnotism are not needed for true spiritual uplift and awakening. That can be achieved only through spiritual transport which enables us to behold in an eternal moment of absolute consciousness, the profound Reality of all Being; and in one pulse of transcendent ecstasy doth it show the deep Essence of all Existence. Spirituality is the real thing genuine, sterling gold; other practices are mere tinsel; Spirituality is a jewel, mesmerism etc. are only sham imitations of little value.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusion.

We started with certain fundamental problems of life, and we found that neither Philosophy, nor Religion could cope with them; only Spirituality could tackle them. And now we see that within spirituality too it is not every kind ef spirituality that will solve them, but only the proper, right one. The so-called offshoots of spirituality—mesmerism, hypnotism etc. are merely trained will-power or highly practised concentration, which is used for dealing with things of this world. As the mind is focussed here on some external point, it keeps us within the limits of Phenomena, and does not help us in flying up into subtle transcendent realms of Absolute Reality. That real spirituality alone can do. Spiritual Transport alone opens our eyes; and unless our eyes are opened, we cannot see; we remain in darkness. Thus a spiritual training is the first thing in life. To search out a spiritual adept should consequently be our rst

duty in this world; for without a competent teacher, we cannot enter the domain of Transport. We should not be carried away by the external polish and outward gloss of tinsel; we have to find out the pure gold; nay, we have to get rare pearls and rubies, and diamonds of the first water. Mesmeric performances which astonish the blind intellect are below even the alphabet of spirituality. Only spiritual transport shows us true Light and reveals absolute Reality; only spirituality solves our problems of life. It is the real thing; it is the greatest thing for us in this world.

CHAPTER V.

Objections to Spirituality considered.

Although spirituality takes us out of darkness and delusion, it opens our inner eyes and removes all our

ignorance; yet various are the charges that have been laid at its door.

(1) Mere Nothingness.

In the first place, Transport has been described as mere nothingness, as a blank negation of thought. As already pointed out, Philosophers argue: When thought is suspended, what else can remain in consciousness. They conclude that it must be 'Nothing', for they are aware of no other consciousness except thought-consciousness. When we close our eyes, we have mere darkness before us, and we think that every body experiences darkness only when he shuts his eyes. When we go to bed we either dream or enter a state of unconsciousness. From this we infer that when saints sleep, they also have a lower order of consciousness *viz.* of dreams, or no consciousness, *viz.* in sound sleep. But this is a wrong conclusion; we cannot apply analogy here. Although saints close their eyes, and apparently go to sleep,

their soul is awake, and they experience spiritual flights into subtle transcendent realms.

This, of course, can never be logically proved to the layman, as colour and light cannot be proved to the blind. But if we do not know of a thing, we have no right to say that it does not exist. At best we can plead our ignorance of it; but with no show of reason can we positively assert its non-existence. To the ignorant, Spiritual Transport may be nothing indeed; but for the 'knowing', it is every thing. By denying it, we deny the very Reality on which all thought and all things depend. Transport is our very being unveiled and unrolled; it is the soul of the whole Cosmos unearthed and laid bare. Saints are as certain of it, as we are of our own existence. Nay, their certainty is more positive and absolute. What does it matter if we are ignorant? That does not affect the existence of spiritual insight and spiritual transport. We do not know these

things now, but we may know them one day. Our ignorance of this moment should not lead us to make a sweeping statement, that there is nothing beyond thought. If we are reasonable, we can at best say that we do not know; we can take up a neutral position. But to deny Transport outright would betray extreme presumption and folly on our part.

(2) Delusion.

But there are others, who, although admitting the existence of spiritual vision, still look upon it as sheer 'Delusion'. According to these people, what we do see is merely the reflection of our own thoughts. From the saint adept we get certain suggestions which work on our mind, and bring up before our mental eye those very pictures, hints for which we have already received. All is due to an intensely excited imagination and highly wrought-up fancy; we see nothing that may have objective reality; we get wrapt

up in our own subjective thoughts and ideas. It is hardly better than ordinary visions and day-dreams. In short, what the saints see in their transport is nothing real and objective; it is sheer delusion, imagination and fancy—the coinage of one's own brain and the outcome of one's own ideas. Such is the charge.

Now, spiritual knowledge contains truth in itself; it is its own truth; and for this reason it is extremely hard to prove it by intellectual argumentation. Yet reasons may be given to show that it is not delusion at least; it is not mere imagination and fancy; it is not only subjective dreaming.

Firstly through spiritual transport we can have knowledge of this world as well as of higher subtler planes, spiritual knowledge about things of this world can be tested by an actual enquiry with our physical organs. And as such knowledge got through transport agrees with the enquiry made otherwise *viz.* through physical

senses, it is a conclusive proof that spiritual insight is not delusion.

With regard to spiritual knowledge about things of higher planes, we know that imagination and fancy cannot create entirely new things; they can only make new combinations of old things. This is an established fact of Psychology. Now, saints state that the things which they perceive in their transport are not like things of this world. They are of a different kind altogether; they belong to a different category. If it is so, then that cannot be mere imagination.

By a suggestion from the saint adept, we can only imagine things of this world; but what we do see in transport is something else. That we cannot imagine; for it is beyond all our past experience and different from it, not only in degree, but in kind. The blind man cannot know colours through a suggestion of them from us; he must get his eyes opened and perceive colours to be able to know them.

For saints we are blind; we must get our inner eyes opened to see their transcendent entities, and experience transport into subtle spiritual planes. The things that they see bear no resemblence to things of this world; their experiences are transcendent and beyond description. How can they give us an exact suggestion ?

And whatever their suggestion, the real experience of a transport is very different from such a suggestion; for this would be an intellectual understanding, a spiritual becoming; this a mere theory, that a transcendent realisation beyond and above all thought.

So it is clear that if spiritual knowledge belongs to an order altogether different from our usual experience, it is not delusion or mere fancy. If the things of transport are truly of a different kind from things of this world, then they are also real. But now the question arises if these so called transcendent entities, which the saints experience in their transport, are

really things of a different order, is it not possible that, although in reality those things are of the same kind as the things of this world, yet the saints wrongly believe them to be otherwise?

But before we discuss this possibility, let us see who is to judge of it. If blind men persist in telling us that light and colour are no reality but a delusion, shall we give up our position? Is it for them to judge whether or not light and colour are things of a different order from the objects of their experience? No, it is we who must decide. They are blind; we see. For us light and colour are immediate facts of consciousness, which need no other argument or testimony for their proof. They are their own proof. Similarly saints know it as an immdiate fact of super-consciousness that things of their transport are really things of a different order from what we experience in this world. Their spiritual experience is its own

proof; it needs no other proof for its validity and truth.

ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਸਭਾ ਉੱਲੂਆਂ ਲਾਈ,
ਬੈਠੇ ਮਿਲ ਨਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਇਕ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੂਰਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ,
ਕੌਣ ਕਰੇ ਉਜਿਆਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਦੂਜੇ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ,
ਸਦਾ ਰਾਤ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਵਾਰੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਸੱਭੋ ਬੋਲੇ,
ਕਰ ਕਰ ਸੋਚ ਵਿਚਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਵਡਾ ਉੱਲੂ,
ਬਾਣੀ ਓਸ ਉਚਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਸੂਰਜ ਤੀਨ ਕਾਲ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਨਹੀਂ,
ਝੂਠੀ ਖ਼ਲਕਤ ਸਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਸੂਰਜ ਅੱਜ ਤੀਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਡਿਠਾ,
ਵਡੀ ਉਮਰ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਜੋ ਕੋਈ ਸੂਰਜ ਸੱਚਾ ਮੰਨੇ,
ਅਕਲ ਓਸ ਦੀ ਮਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੪ ॥

ਏਕ ਹੰਸ ਟੀਸੀ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਾ,
ਉਸ ਨੇ ਊਚ ਪੁਕਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਹੈ ਪਰਭਾਤ ਦੇਖ ਲਓ ਸਾਰੇ,
ਲੱਖਾਂ ਕਿਰਣ ਪਸਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੫ ॥
ਨਾਨਾ ਚਮਕਾਂ ਦਮਕਾਂ ਮਾਰੇ,
ਸੂਰਜ ਅਤਿ ਬਲਕਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਖ਼ੁਦ ਰੋਸ਼ਨ ਫਿਰ ਸਭ ਕੀ ਆਂਖੇਂ,
ਰੋਸ਼ਨ ਕੀਨ ਅਪਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੬ ॥
ਚਮਗਾਦੜ ਘੁੱਗੂ ਆ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ,
ਦੋਨੋਂ ਮੁਨਸਫ਼ ਭਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਝੂਠਾ ਹੰਸ ਤੇ ਸੱਚੇ ਉਲੂ,
ਕੀਆ ਨਿਆਂ ਸੰਭਾਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੭ ॥
ਉੱਲੂ ਸਭ ਟੈਂ ਟੈਂ ਕਰ ਹੱਸੇ,
ਹੰਸ ਮੌਨ ਤਬ ਧਾਰੀ ਜੀ ।
ਚਤਰ ਦਾਸ ਏਹ ਅਜਬ ਅਦਾਲਤ,
ਤੀਨ ਲੋਕ ਸੇ ਨਿਆਰੀ ਜੀ ॥ ੮ ॥

[One day the owls called a meeting; all male and female assembled. One said,

"The Sun has not risen, who will give light?" Another uttered, "Never has he risen; it is always pitch dark." Turn by turn after much reflection every one spoke. There was one elderly owl among them, who stated, "The Sun has never existed; all the people are wrong. I have not seen the Sun up to this day, although I have reached this old age. Whoever believes in the existence of the Sun, is a fool." A swan shouted from the top of the tree "It is broad daylight, all can see; millions of rays are spread. With his dazzling light, the Sun is very powerful; self-luminous, he gives light to all eyes." Bats and owls appeared there,—both great judges! They gave their thoughtful verdict: the swan was wrong and the owls were right. All the owls hooted in laughter; the swan then kept quiet. This is a strange court, O Chattar Das, different from the three worlds.]

When we wake up from sleep, do we ask for a proof to believe that we have

really got up?—That we are no longer in a sleeping condition,—that the waking consciousness is different from sleep? The waking itself is enough to convince us of the change. We know the change as a fact of immediate consciousness. The fact of waking is its own proof. Similarly, for saints, we are in a slumber. We come to know of it as soon as we wake up into their transcendent ecstasy. There is no other proof to show that spiritual transport is a higher order of consciousness. In sleep we consider our dreams to be real, but the moment we wake up, we know which is the reality, dreams or waking. It is self-evident to us then that dreams are unreal, or at least that this world is more real. Similarly, but with a greater certainty do saints know that the world of transport is a greater reality than this physical world. Their transport is its own proof. Neither can any other logical proof be given, nor is it needed. We require no proof for our own existence, why should

saints want a proof of spiritual knowledge which is known to them more intimately than our existence is to us. If saints are otherwise sane and sensible people, it shall be our prejudice and obstinacy if we persist in saying that they cannot judge of spiritual transport, that they wrongly take it to be a super-conscious state.

What proof of light and colour can those born blind demand from us? What proof can we give them? None, except their vision, except showing them light and colour. Either they should believe us, or experience these things themselves. There is no other way to decide the question. Similarly with regard to spiritual knowledge, there are only two ways open to us. Either we should believe saints or try to experience a transport and see for ourselves. Several people, who began with doubt have ended with transcendent knowledge and belief. Seeing is indeed believing. The history of spiritual schools is a standing record of the fact that belief

has invariably come with seeing; and there is not even a single case in which a man had a transport but did not believe.

So long as we do not make an effort to experience a transport ourselves, we should confess our ignorance, and do so with good grace. If we do not know, we should not say that it is impossible. Saints have at least as much right to say that we are in delusion as we have to call them so. This does not settle the point. The right position for us is to say that we do not know. And if we are very anxious to find out what spiritual knowledge is, we can try the experiment ourselves. Then we shall be in a position to speak on the matter. Let us see for ourselves, before we pass our judgment.

आप आप को आप पछानो।
कहा और का नेक न मानो॥

[Know thou thyself by thy self; believe not at all what others say.]—Radha Swami Sahib.

Spiritual knowledge is not blind belief, but actual realisation; it is not a delusion, but transcendent Reality. If we also want to know this, we should try their method of transport.

Moreover, it is not only the things of transport that are of a different order from things of this world, but spiritual consciousness itself is also different from waking or dreaming. It is super-consciousness. Just as waking condition is more conscious than dreaming, similarly transport is a higher consciousness than waking. And the proof that it is really super-consciousness is that super-consciousness itself. Nothing else can ever prove or disprove it.

Further, spiritual knowledge changes our very being. It gives us power to live up to our knowledge; it takes us out of the fire of sensual passions, and lands us in the cool calm abode of extreme bliss and beatitude; and it gives us a transcendent knowledge of everything. If it were mere delusion and imagination, it could not

have the power of changing our habits, our actions and our very nature. Delusion cannot afford us true peace and lasting bliss. It cannot give us transcendent knowledge of Reality; it cannot take us above Phenomena into the very heart of Noumena. And if it does, it is well-worth having. Who would not hug such a delusion as gives him perfect satisfaction and *knowledge* and bliss. Then it would be a delusion in name only; in reality it cannot be a delusion. Spiritual knowledge makes a man heavenly in the true sense; it makes him saintly and divine. Truths of transport enter our very being and become part and parcel of us, an essence of ourselves. They colour all our thinking and doing, they control and guide our life of action as of thought and feeling; they change us into God Himself.

Spiritual knowledge is not a gradual assimilation like intellectual understanding; it is a flash of transcendent Light that shows us all things in their true colour in

a moment of eternal consciousness; it transforms our very being, all in an instant.

ਮਾਨੁਖ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ । ਕਰਤ ਨ ਲਾਗੀ ਬਾਰ ॥

[The Master has turned men into divine beings and no time has he taken to do so.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

By entering the fold of Spirituality, bad men give up their badness; wicked men become pious and saintly; spiritually weak men gain strength to be good and noble; wailing and weeping humanity becomes happy and contented; and all attain to everlasting bliss and beatitude. The effect of spiritual transport is marvellous. It brings about tremendous changes in our lives. Past history shows that through spiritual influence, butchers like 'Sadna' can become pure and godly, prostitutes like 'Ganaka' can attain to true peace and bliss, robbers like Balmilk and Bidhi Chand can be tamed and purified. Surely it is not a delusion that can bring

about such a remarkable change in man's character. Spirituality is something deep struck into Reality; it is Reality alone that can eradicate firm-set habits of many years, (and perhaps many lives), that can change the very nature of man, and give him another personality, so to speak.

And lastly, what is told to the disciple by the spiritual adept is far too little to bear any proportion to what the disciple actually experiences in his transport. No details are mentioned, and those are too many to be described, but the experiences of all saints still agree in every minute detail. If spiritual knowledge were really delusion and the outcome of subjective fancy and imagination, universal agreement would be an impossibility. But the fact is that the spiritual experiences of one man invariably tally with those of others in every single item and detail.

این خبرها واں روایاتِ محق . صدهزاراں پیر بروے متفق

[These are truths on which hundreds

and thousands of spiritual adepts are one.]

یک خلافے نہ میانِ ایں قروں آنچناں کہ است در علمِ ظنوں

[Not even by a hair's breadth do they differ, as intellectually learned people do.)

There may be much difference among various religions, for they rely on Intellect; but there is never a difference among true saints for they see with the transcendent soul. What they experience is objective Reality, which is the same for all. It is not saints who disagree, but some of their so-called followers, who being ignorant of true spiritual realisation, depend for their belief (as already said) on individual interpretation of spiritual writings, which leaves room for difference and discord. In true spiritual knowledge, there is no scope for difference or doubt; for it is not a matter of opinion and guess work; it is a transcendent perception of objective Reality on a plane

of consciousness higher than the intellect and subtler than the senses. And along with other reasons, this universal agreement is also a conclusive proof that spiritual transport is not a delusion.

3. Teaches Selfishness.

Another indictment against spirituality is that it teaches selfishness. Is is not selfish on our part, they say, to sit in a retired corner, trying to improve our own soul, and neglecting all the rest of the world? Is it not better to help the progress of humanity as a whole than to give all our attention to the betterment either of a single soul or a solitary few? Obviously it is; it is really selfish to seek one's own progress and improvement, and neglect thousands of human beings who are crying and wailing, helpless and forlorn. Clearly if a man aims at the improvement of his individual self rather than the advancement of all, he is selfish. It needs no proof to convince us that the good of one man

is of less improtance than the good of two, that the good of two is of less consequence than that of three, and so on. Thus the good of a larger number is better than the good of a smaller group, and the greatest good is the good of all. In fact our aim should be, not only the good of the human race, but the good of all, including animals, beasts, birds, insects and, if possible, even plants and stones. The question, therefore, as already pointed out in Part I Chapter I is: what is good? and how can it be realised?

What is 'good'? Ethical philosophers have written volumes in answer to this question, but there is a great divergence among their views. Some consider 'Happiness' to be the greatest good, the Summum Bonum, some 'Self-Realisation', some 'True Knowledge', some 'Love', some various combinations of these, and some an 'All Round Harmonious Life'. Now, how can we find out what real 'good' is?

As stated already, we are ignorant

and blind, we are unconsicious of our own 'Self'. We know not the profound 'Truth' of our being, nor the deep 'Essence' of this ephemeral world. We experience only Phenomena; Reality is hidden to our shallow and superficial view. Under these circumstances, can we know what 'good' is, unless we first open our eyes and see? Unless we first know ourselves and our surroundings? Unless we know the meaning and significance of all this Phenomena? No, we cannot.

Now, what does spirituality teach us. Does it want us to attend to our own good and neglect others? No, not all. Spirituality merely opens our eyes so that we may see and know our 'self' and our 'environment', and having known these, find out what true 'good' is and thus be in a position to do good to ourselves as well as to others. It is only when we reach this stage of transcendent consciousness that we can truly talk of doing good; before that we merely grope in the dark. And this transcendent know-

ledge cannot be obtained except through spiritual Transport. Saints do not tell us to mind our own interest and become selfish; they only ask us to open our eyes and see, and be able to help others, before we think or talk of doing so.

We are all blind, and still we are anxious to show others the right path. If one blind man leads another, both shall fall into a pit. First we should open our own eyes, and then think of leading others. Our house is aflame and we go to other people to extinguish their fire. But alas! we know not how to put out that fire. In our blind effort we get burnt ourselves, and the devouring flame consumes all. We should first of all look after our own house, and learn how to extinguish fire, before we go to help others. Swami Ram Tirtha has rightly said: "Reformers are wanted not of others, but of themselves", i. e. we should first of all reform our own selves.

मन ही को परबोधिये मन ही को उपदेश।
जो यह मन बस आवई , तो सिष होवें सब देश ॥

[Thine own self do thou reform and to thine own mind do thou preach; for if this mind dost thou control, then shalt thou command the whole world.]

ਮਨ ਜੀਤੈ ਜਗ ਜੀਤ ॥

[By conquering thy mind, do thou conquer the world.]—Guru Granth Sahib.

(*a*) *Mistake of Religious Zealots.*—Before we have opened our own eyes and saved our own selves, most of us become anxious about others and take on the role of a preacher. But first we should look to ourselves. If our own transcendent eyes are not open, how can we lead others on the right track ? If we have not found true happiness and peace of mind ourselves, how can we console others, and give peace to their minds ? If we have no light ourselves, what light shall we show to other people ?

पण्डित केरी पोथियां ज्यों तीतर को ज्ञान ।
औरन सगुन बतावई , अपना फंद न जान ॥

[The Books of the Pandit (learned man) are like the knowledge of the partridge, which telleth others good or bad omen, but knoweth not its own snare.]

Similarly we go out into the world to preach to others. and wander about from place to place, ever anxious to reform mankind, and put people on the right path; but we never care to look into our own selves, nor seek true peace for our own mind. How strange that we are ourselves in the dark, but extremely anxious to lead others! We should find out Light for our own guidance first and then think of showing others the way to God. Spirituality alone can give us that transcendent Light. In the waking state we perceive Phenomena; in spiritual transport we experience Noumena or 'Things-in-themselves'. To use a Kantian phrase. Transport unveils to us the transcendent Reality of all things, so that we may know rightly, and having known, act rightly; so that we may know 'good', and be able

to do good, to others as well as to ourselves.

Spirituality does not only tell us what 'good' is, it also enables us to achieve that 'good'; it teaches us how to do real good to others. Far from making us selfish, it broadens our mental and moral horizon, and makes us truly selfless and benevolent. "Prophets widen our outlook, but priests narrow it".

Spirituality discards the superficial and shallow idea of unselfishness; it places before us the higher ideal of doing good to the souls of people, of transporting them to transcendent realms and liberating them from the thraldom of 'Karmas' and causation. This highest 'good' saints do to all who give them their devotion, and who desire such a transcendent good. Saints are the most unselfish of all men, and they do the greatest possible good to all beings.

People have very strange notions

about Saints. When they think of them, they imagine some unearthly beings sitting in a wild fashion in a lonely corner of a remote forest, and counting the beads of their rosary or offering their prayer to God, with a melancholy face and a depressed look. Well there may be saints of that sort, but there are saints of the other sort as well. Any friend of ours who is *apparently* as much a man of the world as we are, may turn out to be a saint and surprise us. Any man who has had a transport is a saint. We should not go by appearances; they are often deceptive.

Saints' inner vision is open and they see Reality; their penetrating eye comprehends in its outlook both heaven and earth; their spiritual insight reveals to them transcendent entities boyond the portals of Death. Our view is confined to the phenomena of this world, and our 'Good' limited to the concerns of this Physical plane; but spiritual insight grasps

all Infinity and Eternity in one pulse of transcendent consciousness, and the 'good' of the Saints is highest and most absolute. It is the 'good of the spirit', it is true, intrinsic, real 'Good'. Only by realising that ourselves shall we be in a position to do 'Good' to others; only by opening our own eyes shall we be fit to show others the right way; only by learning transport ourselves shall we be able to take the souls of others also to that high pinnacle of superconscious rapture and Divine Glory. This is the way to be truly benevolent and selfless.

Saints transport our souls from this lowest and grossest creation into subtle transcendent realms of pure spirituality; they take us out of this delusion and darkness of Phenomena into the Light of absolute Reality. They do good to our very being, to our essence, to our soul, and their good is everlasting and eternal. Out of the fire of hell do they pull us, and on the wings of love do they carry us, and in

the lap of our heavenly Father do they place us. From this prison of matter, they liberate our soul, and take it home to God. What greater good can there possibly be?

4. Contradictions in Spiritual Books.

Further, people say that spiritual literature abounds with contradictory statements. Our full answer to this objection has already been given in Chapter III of this Part, near the end, where it is explained that the so-called contradictions are only skin-deep. The contradiction lies in the words, not in the truth expressed therein. Reality is so comprehensive and transcendent that it cannot even vaguely be expressed except in contradictory terms. There are various grades of Reality, and corresponding to them, there are various degrees of Truth. What is true for one stage of Reality may not be true for a higher spiritual plane. Thus to a man who is not initiated into spiritual secrets,

utterances on different stages of Reality or planes of consciousness would appear contradictory. When during a spiritual transport, the soul flies up into subtler spititual realms of transcendent Reality, all contradiction fumes away. The contradiction is not in the Reality or the truth, but only in the verbal expression of it. It exists only for the frail, limited human intellect, not for the penetrating, spiritual transcendent insight of the saints.

The fact appears to be that Reality evades all description and any attempt to put it into words must lead to verbal contradictions; but once we experience a transport and go up into transcendent realms, all mystery is solved, and all contradiction reconciled.

5. Repetition in Spiritual Writings.

And the last accusation against Spirituality—a petty one—is that its books contain too much of repetition, and we suppose to some extent all saints would

plead guilty to the charge. But alas! for all this repetition we still do not understand saints, we do not care to listen to them; we do not think on what they say. They come into the world with a definite message from God, and what else should they do but deliver that message to us again and again in various forms and ways? The message is so highly exalted, and weighty, that no repetition of it can be too much. But we turn a deaf ear to them. We do not let their divine message enter our head, and our heart. If our dear Heavenly Father and Lord inviteth us up into His blissful mansions, is it not then worth listening to a thousand times? And can such a welcome news lose its charm by repetition?

So firstly, saints must give us their message over and over again, for that is the object of their advent into this world; secondly the more weighty a message, the greater the number of repetitions that it needs; and lastly if a thing is true, it is

true whether uttered once or many times. Repetition may be considered a fault by the narrow view of linguistic beauty; but spiritual transport transcends all such superficial niceties. It is the one profound Truth of life, and the ultimate Reality of the universe; if that is not to be told again and again, what else is ?

Compared with transport and its transcendent entities, this world and its doings are a sham;—mere children's play; but we attach too much importance to institutions and activities of this world, When we conquer other lands and win big battles, we pride ourselves on our achievement. We boast of our fresh discoveries and new inventions, and talk of our vast knowledge and huge enterprises. Some nations are proud of their freedom and liberty, some others are still struggling to be free. We cry for Swaraj and Home Rule, and look upon it as perhaps the greatest thing. But even such momentous affairs of the world—momentous from our

point of view—are for true saints only children's sport; for in one pulse of universal consciousness they behold thousands of worlds being created and dissolved, and thousands of worlds sweeping through the infinity of Space and rolling in the eternity of Time; and then these great saints look beyond all Time and Space, beyond Heaven and Hell, beyond cosmos and chaos, beyond Past, Present, and Future; and behold the Divine Light of Absolute Naked Truth, and enter supreme Essence of the ultimate transcendent Being, and become One with Him. What care can they have for our petty little things! It is due to our stunted vision that we look upon the activities of this world as great things; in the light of spiritual transport, they dwindle into extreme insignificance and vanish out of sight. Sriritual truths are the paramount realities of life and the profound secrets of the universe; why should they not be talked of again and again?

6. Summary and Conclusion.

Thus transport is not nothingness, nor a delusion or creation of our own imagination. It is a transcendent experience of objective Reality. Spirituality does not teach us to be selfish; it merely opens our inner eye, so that we may look before we leap and know before we do. In fact it makes us most unselfish, in the real sense of the word.

Now the question arises; what are the various spiritual parctices that take us into the sphere of transport ? And what is the reach or efficacy of each ? We want to know this, so that we may choose the very best, one which may easily and safely transport us into the very highest and last stage of Absolute Transcendence. In the next Part therefore we shall take up the question of spiritual practices and spiritual schools. The last part is devoted to 'Surat-Shabad' yoga, which is the best spiritual method. This book is in two Volumes, and Parts III and IV will constitute Volume II.